THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO LITERATURE, ROMANCE, THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XXVIII, ROBERT BONNER, CORNER OF WILLIAM AND SPRUCE STS. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1872 TERMS, $2 PER ANNUM. IN ADVANCE. NO. 34.

BLACK EYES OR BLUE.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

Down through the blooming orchard,
On through the meadow sweet,
Where hyacinths stood for banners,
And bobolinks' wars was sweet,
Two lovers walked together
That turned the entire world,
Lettered, as lists to leave them,
A trifle young and gay.

To-Carl, with heart divided
'Twixt maidens either side;
The meadow street was Eden,
The orchard Paradise.
Thin side, the summer lightnings,
Black eyes grew warm and bright;
That side, blue eyes seemed softly
Or veiled their tender light.

Carl could not tell, or thought so,
Which one he loved the best;
But this he knew these days,
He was a lovers' fool
"Black eyes or blue?" The petals
Down on the stamens fell,
"Black," "blue," "black," "blue," six others
To gather—one point left.

Somebody blushed like roses
Or copy-red tinted sky,
Somebody looked at Heaven,
And then—you pulled out two.

The sun at its setting was golden,
And stone on the mistwarmer bay;
But Love was not seen in the meadow,
Nor yet in the orchard that day.

Two came; but one was absent,
The other was a second and a twist,
Blue eyes were touched with dainty,
And blue eyes left out of the twist.

Oh, our fading fear to the shadow,
Our eyes growing brighter—Alas!
There are glances shown in the closets and dark,
As well as in midsummer grass.

"Look you hid to-day, darling?" during
The blushes the lovely one showed,
And waked her from reverie as
She smiled as she plucked out a petal,
And her voice had a sad little shiver,
As she held up the last to her lover,
"See, Carl, it is! Blue-eyes just mine."

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1872, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS, AT WASHINGTON.

MRS. HAWLEY AND MISS DALL LEAVING THE HOUSE OF CAPTAIN PEDDER.

The Plot Against Hawley;

OR,

PRISONER OF DESOLATION.

BY LYON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MARSHAL," "RED KNIFE," "THE SIGN OF THE SCARLET HAND," "THE CRIMSON CROSS," "MARK HERON'S LOCK," ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.

VINDICATION.

We must now resume the thread of affairs in New York, beginning with those events which immediately concern Mrs. Hawley.

Her resolve to take personal cognizance of the proposed interview between Capt. Pedder and Tom Breiling, at the former's house, was duly acted upon.

At half-past eight o'clock of the evening of the day which had brought such startling revelations to the young wife, she was ensconced in the room over the back parlor of Capt. Pedder's house, where Sarah and Miss Dall had occupied nearly a year, and ever since the commencement of her acquaintance with the Pedders.

Mrs. Hawley had gained the house, in company with Miss Dall, whose society had given them admittance, without being particularly noticed, the evening being windy, and the twilight having merged into night almost before they had left the cars at Weehawken, at the front steps of the dwelling.

They had taken up their position near the register hole which had proved so fatal to the secret of the brother and sister, and they were now waiting and listening amid the gathering shadows of the summer night.

"I'm sure Pedder is not in the house if whispered the young wife.

"He left about eight o'clops here alone to-day—Sarah's departure for Desolation, and takes his meals at his club, or elsewhere."

And what has become of that girl Kate that has been living with the couple a month?"

Kate has gone to Newark to spend a month with her mother."

"There's not a soul save ourselves in the house, then, at this moment."

"Not a soul, unless Tom has received her discharge in due form, and is about coming back—at least not until the return of Miss Pedder from her voyage to the island of Desolation."

Mrs. Hawley clasped her hand to her heart and drew her breath hard.

"Oh! the agony of thinking that my husband's perilous prison-pap from that terrible island!" she murmured—"of thinking that he has been there all these long months and of knowing that that wretched woman is now on her way there to gloat over the misery of a living widow of yet dead, and with the intention of imposing herself upon my husband!"

"You might have a worse misery," suggested Miss Dall cheerfully. I have not an immense gladness to know that Mr. Hawley is coming to your assistance."

"Oh! it's a time too great for utterance!"

"And it is not a little thing that we are upon the track of this great wickedness," continued Miss Dall. "Heaven has been merciful. The wicked do not accomplish their ends—only those poor and petty labors which condemn directly to their own destruction. Just think how gloriously your uncle Thomas is coming to your assistance."

At this indistinct heavy footsteps began to sound in the hall, and a moment later a door closing Bleecker street from the direction of Broadway.

"I think it's Pedder," decided Miss Dall, with a warning pressure upon the arm of her companion. "It is near the hour he visited."

Mrs. Hawley breathed hard again.

"I feel that it is Pedder!" she murmured, clasping her hand again to her heart, which was throbbing almost audibly.

The house was now quite in darkness, as well as in silence, for Sarah and Kate were in bed, and the watchers were compelled to depend upon their hearing for their information in regard to all that was occurring around them. They had left open the door leading from their room into the hall, however, and it was not difficult for them to follow the movements of the new-comer, as he ascended the steps of the dwelling, turned a night-key in the lock, and entered, closing the door behind him.

"It's Pedder, sure enough," breathed Miss Dall, after listening a moment in breathless suspense upon the side of the hall. "That trick has become habitual to him lately. He's constantly on the qui vive and excited."

The footsteps proceeded to the back parlor with a quickening sullenness which, and the next instant the rays of a gas jet so had lighted cast his shadow into the hall and upon the wall at the back of the stairs, in such a way that the watchers saw and recognized it distinctly.

"Tom's dog!" muttered Pedder.

Rummaging around the back parlor a few moments, he came to the door communicating by transom to pass, and, after making heavily into a chair and drawing off his boots.

"How dull it is here!" he added, turning in a full beat of gas and looking around disconsolately.

He took a few turns back and forth in the room, and then turned out a dram of brandy from a decanter he kept habitually in a little cupboard above the writing-desk that occupied one rear corner of the apartment. This he swallowed with a gulp, and then sat down. He was evidently weary with the day's toils and cares, and worried and gloomy.

Seating himself at his desk, he ran his eyes over a few memoranda of expenses, and then drew forth some elegant letter-paper.

Mrs. Hawley raised a little the board and carpet that covered the register hole, and extended herself beside it, as did Miss Dall, in order that they might not lose a single word in the account of the room beneath her.

How bloated and coarse he looked to her at that moment of sourness and bitterness! How unlike he was to her husband!

"I ought to write to Mrs. Hawley," muttered Pedder, as he rested his elbow upon the desk, and his chin in the hollow of his hand.

"How can I get upon better terms with her than I am now? I'll write her a letter, by Jove! assuring her a cash advance—backward. By wooing of the 'fair widow' hasn't gone on quite as briskly as I expected.

He raised his head, striking the desk fiercely with his clenched hand, and continued:

"What an infernal misery it is to be 'spooney' after a woman that does not care a picker's contingental blessing about you! The other one for me remains as cold as a frozen fish. I'm about to bring to a head—to put the matter to the touch of the brewer's cooper, and, sickening to the touch and casting stone's eyes from a distance! Egad! I wish I'd killed Hawley—is not dead, anyhow, by Mrs. Hawley," mumbling him mate of the *Childers*, for that would have eased my pent-up feelings! And to think of myself as dancing attendance upon this she-cousin, and in the mean time operating to extract that squalling baby, and no thought! I'm getting sick of it, by Jove! I'll write her—it makes me mad to look upon her and be received the coon alive and well at Desolation, and that son and wife have before her reach! Bourne, for if she don't lead him a life that would kill a woman's devil, then I have mistaken her sweet temper altogether."

Miss Dall pressed the arm of Mrs. Hawley, whose form was tremulous with her great joy, in token that she had caught every word of From Pedder's own lips and she received the blessed evidence.

"Well, well, I must continue to dig and scratch, as I've begun," concluded Pedder, as he arose and commenced to walk to and fro. "The plot hangs fire a little, but it must certainly be successful.

He had not been walking back and forth more than a minute, when he paused, as if in vague but ambiguous way to speculate upon some of the stages that he sketched the house.

Ah, there is Tom!" exclaimed Pedder, and his face brightened wickedly, as he stepped toward the door, with the noiselessness of slippers, to give the visitor admittance.

The new comer was Breiling, the bending, whose dress and manners had all the pretentiousness we have heretofore noticed. He was punctual, as usual, the clock above Pedder's head having just struck nine.

"Ain't sick, I hope?" was his first remark, after exchanging salutations with his employer.

"No," returned Pedder. "Do I look sick?"

"You look worried, uneasy, dissatisfied, annoyed and bothered—if you'll pardon my frankness."

"Well, my looks don't belie me upon any of those points," admitted Pedder, as he sank into his chair, motioning Tom to a seat near him.

"You are lonely, I suppose; miss your sister, and all that."

"You've hit it," suppose. Won't you have a drink, Tom?"

"Thanks. Should never refuse that invitation from you, Pedder, you're so generous with your liquor."

The employer produced his decanter again, with a sardonic laugh, and the two men drank together.

"Have a cigar, Tom?"

"Thanks, two or three of them, since you are so kind as to proffer them."

Both were soon smoking.

"Tom," began Capt. Pedder, finding his tongue loosened, "you seem to me as much like a dog as you ever stood a brick at."

"Thanks, Pedder!" Didn't you make twenty thousand dollars by your last voyage to Australia?"

"Yes, I did?"

"Well, with twenty thousand dollars, in this nineteenth century a man can live like a prince in any quarter of the world he possesses—London, or Paris? Then why miserly?"

"It's the first place, I'm worried about my sister—not that we are over-affectionate, but it's the way that the landsmen of a captain's trails and Desolation. The Australian route is a long one, and I'm in a state of constant nervous dread as to the clipper's being wrecked, Captain Hooper is a sound man, and a wreck isn't probable. And as to your Pedder further. "My real trouble is, that I am not the man I was before I left for the island. I'm afflicted with the blues, and into fathoms of the sea of the brewer's cooper, sickening to the touch and casting stone's eyes from a distance! Egad! I wish I'd killed Hawley—is not dead, anyhow, by Mrs. Hawley," mumbling him mate of the *Childers*, for that would have eased my pent-up feelings! And to think of myself as dancing attendance upon this she-cousin, and in the mean time operating to extract that squalling baby, and no thought! I'm getting sick of it, by Jove! I'll write her—it makes me mad to look upon her and be received the coon alive and well at Desolation, and that son and wife him

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Hawley is alive at the island of Desolation, playing Robinson Crusoe all alone by himself, and much against his will. Miss Pedder is on her way out there in the *Childers*, with the intention of telling him that Mrs. Hawley is dead, and all that sort of thing. And the question that now arises is one of just five words: What are we to do?"

"We are to proceed to set things to right as soon as we can," declared Mrs. Hawley emphatically, all eyes having turned to her for an answer to Mr. Jilson's question. "Pedder and his sister are to be defeated in their wickedness, and my husband is to be set free from his horrible imprisonment. I shall sail at once for Desolation."

The two young gentlemen exchanged glances of intelligence with each other.

"Mr. Wilber and I have discussed your probable action, Mrs. Hawley," said Jilson, "and we have made some inquiries this afternoon bearing upon this very point. We are sorry to learn that Minuell & Co. will not dispatch another ship to Australia under three or four months."

"Then we must look elsewhere," returned Mrs. Hawley, as decidedly as before.

"The very thing Mr. Wilber and I said to ourselves," went on Jilson, "and we have accordingly looked elsewhere—you can imagine with what feverish haste. We have looked through all the shipping journals, and visited a dozen shipping offices—"

"And our search has finally been rewarded," broke in Wilber, who was in a glow of joyous excitement.

"You have found a ship, then, which is about to sail for Australia, or in that direction?" murmured Mrs. Hawley.

"We have," replied Jilson. "We learned at the eleventh hour that Thompson & Co. are about to dispatch a ship to Melbourne. We could not at first credit the information, for two reasons: First, Thompson & Co. are not in the Australian trade, but confine themselves to freight and passenger business to Liverpool; second, we had not seen along the docks or in any newspaper the least hint of such an intention—"

"But on visiting Thompson & Co. at their office," broke in Wilber again, "we found that our information was perfectly correct. Thompson & Co. *do* intend to dispatch one of their ships to Australia, in accordance with an exceptional arrangement they have made with two or three large shipping houses. The freight and passenger lists of this ship have been full for a week past, and that is why we did not get any trace of her in the papers. She is a fine vessel, and a clipper—the *Ocean Monarch*—and she sails day after to-morrow."

Mrs. Hawley echoed the concluding words, arising excitedly to her feet.

"But Desolation is out of her course," suggested Mrs. Piper. "And her passenger list already full?"

"And Thompson & Co. accordingly told us," said Wilber, "that a call at Desolation was simply impossible, and that they could not take another passenger, for love or money."

The young wife and mother turned deathly pale, sinking back into her chair.

"But hear what *we* had to say in the case," said Jilson, with suppressed jubilance. "When a lady has the honor of being the niece and only relative of a great East Indian millionaire, it is not necessary for her friends to take a negative answer, when an affirmative answer will suit them better. I reflected that I, Henry Jilson, as small as I am, have the pleasure of being a trusted servant of the house of Duncan, Sherman & Co. I reflected too, that your uncle, Mrs. Hawley, has put a hundred thousand dollars into the hands of my principals, in addition to the hundred thousand dollars we are holding subject to your order—"

"And we accordingly resolved that we wouldn't take Mr. Thompson's negative for an answer," broke in Wilber once more, "and in less than a minute Jilson was looking for his chief, Mr. Duncan. Mr. Duncan found, Jilson told him everything—Pedder's wickedness, Mr. Hawley's danger, Mrs. Hawley's distress and her hundred thousand, Mr. Aymar's expected return from India and his million—in short, *everything*."

"And what—did Mr. Duncan say?" faltered Mrs. Hawley breathlessly.

"Why, he simply said that he would attend to the matter," replied Wilber. "He simply went with Jilson to Mr. Thompson, and told Mr. Thompson the facts in the case. Then he discussed with Mr. Thompson several necessary points, such as insurance, and the whole arrangement was satisfactorily concluded. Mrs. Hawley is to sail in the *Monarch*, with as many friends as she pleases, and the *Monarch* is to call at the island of Desolation."

"Thank God!" exclaimed Mrs. Hawley, as her eyes filled with tears. "And the *Monarch* sails day after to-morrow?"

The young gentlemen both bowed.

"I shall sail in the *Monarch*, of course," said Mrs. Hawley, "and I am more obliged and indebted to you all than my feeble thanks can tell you. But I shall want company. Who will go with me? Will you, Miss Dail?"

"With the greatest pleasure."

"Will you, Mr. Wilber?"

"You are only too kind, Mrs. Hawley. I have long been wishing I could escape from my clerkship. I shall bear you company with a double delight—the pleasure of serving you, and the joy of being near the young lady who is to be Mrs. Wilber."

"I will take baby—which will suit me a thousand times better than to leave him behind me," said the young mother. "Miss Dail and Mr. Wilber will afford me sufficient protection and companionship. Mr. Jilson cannot well be spared from home, I judge from certain remarks he has made, but he can continue to render me the greatest of services here. My uncle, Mr. Aymar, was to sail from Calcutta about the middle of February, and he is accordingly overdue at this port at this very moment. I would like to charge you, Mr. Jilson, with the reception of my uncle, and with the duty of explaining to him all that has happened."

"Thanks. I was about to offer my services to this very end," said Jilson. "As you have observed, I cannot very well leave home at present, but all that I can do for you here, Mrs. Hawley, shall be done with the greatest zeal and pleasure."

"Well, what am *I* to do?" demanded Mrs. Piper, arising. "It seems that I am of no further use or account whatever."

"I was coming to that, my dear Mrs. Piper," said Mrs. Hawley, embracing her affectionately. "You are to remain just where you are, and so be here to take care of 'Uncle Tommy.' The moment he arrives in New York, Mr. Jilson is to bring him here, Mrs. Piper, and all I ask of you is that you will be as kind and good to my uncle as you have been to me ever since the first hour of our acquaintance."

"Bravo! All is settled!" cried Wilber, seizing Miss Dail in his arms and giving her a merry waltz across the room. "Won't Mr. Hawley be surprised to see us dropping in upon him some fine morning before breakfast? That baby especially will astonish him!"

The remainder of the evening was passed in discussing various details, and then the little party separated.

The night proved a sleepless one to Mrs. Hawley, but it was a happy one. The following day glided away like a vision, it was so full of busy preparations, and then came the morning of the *Monarch's* departure.

To keep everything quiet, it was arranged that Mrs. Hawley's name should not appear in the published list of passengers.

She went aboard early, with her friends, and took refuge in her state-room, thus avoiding all the crowds and excitement incident to the departure. But Mr. Duncan and Mr. Thompson both came to make her personal acquaintance, and both assured her of their services, as of their sympathy, in every possible way and manner. Mrs. Piper and Mr. Jilson were both there to see her off; and Mr. Thompson brought the commander of the ship to her room, recommending her to his especial care and attention. And so everything was made as pleasant as possible.

And when at length the majority of her friends had left her and gone ashore, leaving only baby and Miss Dail and Mr. Wilber—when at length the ship had left her dock and sailed down the harbor and headed out into the trackless ocean—then it was that Mrs. Hawley stole up to the deck and detached her thoughts from the shores behind her and sent them ahead to her husband, and then it was that her eyes filled with tears, and her heart quickened its throbs, and she murmured softly:

"Coming! *coming!*"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A DAY IN THE COUNTRY.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"The sweetest place you ever saw, my dear," said Mrs. Ecclesfield. "I went with Maurice to look at it yesterday. A real low-eaved cottage, with trellises over all the windows, and a charming little lawn sloping down to the river-side, and lots of sweet-smelling honeysuckle, and espaliers full of peaches and apricots, and the garden all ready planted, and the rent—oh, the merest trifle, my dear, compared to the ruinous rates one is forced to pay for a decent house in the city."

"But isn't it very far from Mr. Ecclesfield's business?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"An hour, by boat; but that is nothing when one has the paper to read, and all one's friends sitting around, ready to talk politics and all that sort of thing, for passing the time."

And away bustled the young bride to see about engaging garden tools and glass fruit dishes, and a patent cream freezer, and all the other housekeeping delights supposed to be inseparable adjuncts of a house in the country.

"Good-bye, my darling!" said Mr. Ecclesfield, on the bright June morning on which he had safely established his wife and her household at Hillside Cottage. "I'll bring up Jones and Barksdale to dinner, just to taste our new strawberries. You'll not be dull, Jessie?"

"Dull! In this paradise of a place! Oh, never, Maurice!"

And Mrs. Ecclesfield tripped back to the house, with her apron full of roses.

At the door Kathleen the cook met her.

"If ye please, ma'am, where's the wather?"

"The water, Kathleen! Why, in the faucets, to be sure, over the kitchen sink. Where should it be?"

"Sorry a faucet is there, ma'am, or a sink either."

"But, Kathleen, there must be water somewhere."

"Faix, ma'am, and that's what I was after thinkin', me own self; but I don't see aither hide nor hair of it! And will yez plase to come and look yerself?"

Jessie advanced to the kitchen threshold rather unwillingly; she was, as yet, a novice in housekeeping duties; nor did this department of her woman's kingdom look particularly inviting. The floor was damp and mouldy, the ceilings black with soot and smoke, and the newly kindled fire spluttered and smoked sullenly in the rickety range.

"Well, Kathleen," she said, "you'll have to go to the river."

"Till the river! For water to bile the fish and the peraties! An' the cows a standin' in it knee keep, let alone the dhirty little boys bathin' in it, like so many imps o' Satan. Sure, ma'am, it isn't that you're manin'!"

"But there *must* be water somewhere, Kathleen. What did Mr. Dale's family do?"

"Well, ma'am, and I can't be sayin'."

Mrs. Ecclesfield looped up her white dress at once, and got her garden hat.

"I'm going to look," she said. "Of course we can't get along without water."

She found it presently—a sunken hole at the end of a long, grass-grown path, with a leaking bucket and a long wet rope lying beside it.

"And is it here I've got to come for every dhrop of water?" demanded Kathleen, in consternation.

"It won't be much, Kathleen, when you are used to it," coaxed Mrs. Ecclesfield.

"My goodness me! who are all those people getting out of a boat, and climbing up the bank, with baskets and bottles and things?"

Kathleen stared, shading her eyes with her hand.

"'Deed, ma'am, I believe it's a picnic party."

"A picnic party!" cried Jessie, firing up. "And what business have they here, with their horrid black bottles and paper parcels, I'd like to know? Go and order them off the premises, Kathleen, at once!"

And Kathleen, in no wise objecting, hurried to obey her lady's behests.

Presently she returned, somewhat crestfallen.

"They won't go, ma'am."

"Won't go! Are they aware that these are private grounds?"

"I told 'em so, ma'am, often enough. But they're a-settin' down to lunch in the arbor!"

Mrs. Ecclesfield colored scarlet with indignation.

"Call a policeman, Kathleen, at once!"

"There an't no police, ma'am, only Teddy the errand-boy, and he isn't twelve years old yet."

"But what *are* we to do, Kathleen?"

"We can't do nothin', ma'am, but grin and bear it," said honest Kathleen. "Bridget, that used to live with Mrs. Dale's people, came here for a cup o' meal this mornin', and she says it's a easy place to land, and all the picnics comes here, and they has fights sometimes, and—"

Mrs. Ecclesfield uttered a little scream and fled into the house. The *couleur de rose* that had adorned her "country home" was fast becoming dispelled; she was beginning to wish herself back within the area of stone flaggings and metropolitan lamp posts.

"Kathleen," said she with a little sigh, "we will have ice-cream and strawberries for dessert."

"And where is it we'll get them, ma'am?"

"Why, there is the new patent freezer, warranted to take only three minutes."

"An' where's the crame?"

Jessie laughed.

"To think of your asking such a question as that, Kathleen, when there are three cows!"

"Aye, but where is they? It's meself hasn't seen the whisk of a cow's tail since I've been here."

"Send Teddy for them."

"It's what I thought of meself, to get milk for the biscuit; but Teddy says they've been lost for a week."

"Lost!" cried Jessie Ecclesfield blankly. "The cows! Well, then we shall have to content ourselves with the berries, eaten with powdered sugar."

Kathleen looked doubtful.

"Sure and *I* haven't unpacked any powdhered sugar; it's only good claue brown coffee sugar."

"But that won't do for berries, Kathleen."

"And what will we do?"

"I am sure I don't know," answered Mrs. Ecclesfield despairingly. "Send to the grocery."

"There's none this side o' the landing, ma'am, and that's three miles off."

Jessie bit her lip.

"I will go and get the strawberries, at any event," said she. "Give me a basket, Kathleen."

But the picnickers were already in triumphant possession of the strawberry bed.

"Go away instantly," said Mrs. Ecclesfield, stamping her French boot on the grass. "How dare you trespass so?"

A red-faced matron rose up out of the berry vines close to her, with three tow-headed little boys hanging to her skirts.

"And I should think you'd be ashamed of yourself, grinding the faces of the poor!" she screeched, so sharply that Jessie dropped her basket and started back involuntarily. "But it's always the way with them that's rich. It won't be so in the next world, that's *one* comfort. To grudge a few berries out o' *this* big field! But we won't go away till we're ready; so there, now!"

And the three tow-headed boys, who appeared to be diverting themselves with dancing about and crushing a score of rich juicy berries to every one they picked, made such a charge in Mrs. Ecclesfield's direction that she fairly turned and fled.

"They *must* be going away soon," she thought, "and I must wait until then."

But even the peace of the musty-smelling little parlor, where there were ominous spots of blue mould on the wall-paper and wasp's nests under the cornices, was not destined to remain uninvaded. A brisk thunder-shower coming up, the picnic party unceremoniously took possession of the house; and Jessie, terrified at Kathleen's stories of "fights," and noticing that some of the men talked loud and thick, took refuge in the wood-house, where the roof leaked plentifully over her delicate lilac muslin dress, and a squealing pig, divided from her by only one slender partition of boards, rent the air with his cries.

Suddenly Kathleen rushed into the wood-house, her luxuriant black hair tumbling down her back, her eyes protruding from their sockets.

Jessie started up in terror.

"Why, Kathleen," she cried, "what is the matter?"

"Yez niver towld me there was a ghost!" screamed Kathleen, "or it's meself niver would have come near the tumble down owld shanty! Give me me month's wages, and let me go. I wouldn't slape in the house a night, no, not for it's weight in gold."

"A ghost, Kathleen! What on earth can you mean?"

"And what *should* I be manin', let alone what I'm saying! Give me the ten dollars, and let me go before night? For isn't it Mike Dooley that's sayin' this place is called the Haunted House, as full o' ghosts as an egg is of meat! Wid one all to hisself in the kitchen, groanin' and lurchin' round the pots and pans, so that a dacent girrel can't stay in the house!"

"But, Kathleen, all this is nonsense. For, don't you see—"

"Me wages—me wages!" reiterated the terror-stricken Kathleen. And Mrs. Ecclesfield could only comply with her demand. And five minutes afterward she could see the superstitious damsel rushing down the lane, desperately intent on catching the evening boat for New York.

Twilight fell, dark and rainy. The picnickers had at last graciously concluded to depart, leaving evident traces of muddy feet and dirty fingers on sofas, curtains and carpets, and the kitchen fire had gone out in ashes and embers. Mrs. Ecclesfield would have lighted a lamp had she known where to find one, and not been mortally afraid of kerosene oil. As it was, she sat crying in the middle of the room when Maurice strode cheerfully in.

"Why, my little pet," he cried, in consternation, "what's the matter?"

"Take me back to New York, Maurice," sobbed Jessie, "for I am sick of the country. I never, never can live here!"

The next day Mr. Ecclesfield moved his wife and other household deities to the city, thereby losing a quarter's rent of "Hillside Cottage," and considering himself to have gotten off cheaply at that. And Mrs. Jessie has never since had a word to say about the delights of "life in the country!"

OFF HER GUARD.

BY ANNA SHEILDS.

Uncle Will. Harding was in a quandary, and upon his frank, pleasant face the imp of Care was drawing unusual lines of reflection. He was a bachelor, but he had brought up one boy, his nephew, from copper-toed shoes and marbles to a partnership in his own well-known law office.

Already, in three years, the talented young lawyer had started the business into new life, and scattered the dust of his easy-going uncle's documents in every direction. Already Harry Harding was mentioned by his seniors in the profession as one likely to make his mark, and place his name far higher than his unambitious uncle had ever put his own. Indeed, smiling friends declared that the only real use Will. Harding's legal knowledge had ever been to him, was to give him the power of instructing his nephew, and take good care of his own comfortable income and said nephew's patrimony.

Sitting in his office musing, Uncle Will.'s thoughts ran something in this wise:

"Wants to get married to a girl who has been an heiress, a milliner, and an heiress again! Lost her money when she was but sixteen, was a milliner for four years, and now, by the death of a dishonest guardian, regains her property. All very well, as far as it goes. Pretty girl; romantic story! But what bothers me is the milliner episode. Sixteen is an impressible age. What impress was left on that young life? Harry should marry a lady. He has money enough of his own. By the way, if he is going to marry Alice Dunham, I am glad he proposed before her guardian died. He has position, education, and cultivation. Will this girl raise him or lower him? Vulgar beauty, outside polish, and innate coarseness are so often seen together, and it is so hard to catch a young lady off her guard. Dear! dear! I am half sorry he asked my advice; but how could I say Nay when he was so much in love? Ah, dear! I might have been a different man if my love dream had not been all a dream. With a wife to cheer me, children to inherit my name, I might have worked my way upward, instead of sitting down to a humdrum, almost useless existence. But I hope she is a lady. She will not give Harry an answer until she knows I approve of his choice. That looks well. But of course she will have all her company manners on for me when I call this evening, so how can I say aught but yes? Botheration! I wish they had settled the business between them, and left me out altogether."

The old gentleman rose as he finished his reverie, and gave himself a shake, as if throwing off his perplexities for the time.

"Three o'clock! and I have had no luncheon," he said aloud, looking at his watch. "I'll run into Jones' and get some oysters," and he drew on his overcoat as he spoke.

The restaurant had a deserted look as the old gentleman entered, the crowd of luncheon seekers usually scattering at an earlier hour, but Mr. Harding selected a little corner table, and opened a newspaper. Before his order was filled, two young ladies, richly and becomingly dressed, came in, chatting gayly, and took possession of a table near his own.

One of them, a brown-eyed, soft-complexioned girl, attracted the old gentleman's eye, by the perfect taste and propriety of her dress, which showed care in selection, was of rich material, and yet had no glowing contrast or showy point. The other, a brunette, wore a dress of equal richness, but just a trifle too showy for good taste, though calculated to heighten her glowing style of prettiness. This last named drew a chair toward her, after seating herself, and put up her feet in an attitude that would scarcely bear criticism. She then proceeded to pour into her lap the contents of her shopping bag.

"Ella!" her companion said, in a low tone, with an expression of shocked surprise.

"Oh, pshaw!" said the other, "who cares? I know this is not a drawing-room attitude, but there is no one here. I want to see if I have all the things I want. Isn't that a lovely pink saucer?"

"It is a beautiful color, certainly."

"Why didn't you get one? That is the only fault in your face; you are too pale. Just the tiniest tinge of this would make you lovely."

"I am afraid I must resign the hope of being lovely, then," was the reply, "if it depends upon the use of rouge."

"Every one to her taste. For my part, I believe in a little art, if Nature is unkind. See my new frizettes. You don't need frizettes, with your crop of short curls. I wish my hair was curly. No, I don't. Black curls are niggery. I wonder if our order is ever coming. I am famishing. An't you hungry?"

"Very. Did you notice that painting in G——'s window, Ella?"

"No. I never look at pictures, unless I am at a picture gallery with some companion I am fascinating. Then I can discourse as eloquently as any lady upon lights and shades, attitudes and expressions. I always study the catalogue beforehand, to see what it is safe to admire. But you draw, don't you?"

"I have commenced my lessons again. I had to give them up when I was at Madame Rigand's."

"See here, Alice," said Ella earnestly, "I wouldn't talk about Madame Rigand's now, if I were you."

"Do I talk about it?"

"Well, refer to it, I mean. Of course I understand all about it; but there are some people, you know, who might think it odd to hear you talk about being in a milliner's store."

"There is nothing odd about it. I was obliged to earn my living, and I did it. I was too young for a teacher, so I became a milliner. I do not deny, however, that I am very glad to have my money again, and I am studying very hard to make up for the time I have lost."

"Bah! You know enough for an heiress. For my part, if I find time for a singing lesson twice a week, it is all I aspire to. Here comes our luncheon. Have a cobbler, Alice?"

"A cobbler?"

"Sherry. Bring two," to the waiter.

"No, no," said Alice hastily, "not for me. I never drink wine, Ella."

"Don't you? I don't before folks, but when I can enjoy a luncheon alone, I always have wine. Help yourself, Alice, while I put these things back in my bag. I have not half I want. We will go back to our shopping after luncheon."

Just over the top of his paper Mr. Harding watched the ladies eating their luncheon. The brown-eyed Alice and the black-eyed Ella, all unconscious of his criticising scrutiny, ate with young, hearty appetites, chatting of their purchases made and to come.

Ella ate with a total disregard of the little niceties that seemed second nature to her companion. Without any affectation, with no constraint, Alice was refined in every movement, evidently accustomed in the daily routine of her meals to observe the elegancies of table etiquette, while her companion used her knife and fork, cup, saucer and plate with a carelessness that spoke ill for her home breeding. Something of the contrast seemed to strike the young girl herself, for she said:

"Don't mind me, Alice. Eat heartily, and don't mind company manners."

"But," Alice said, blushing, "I have no company manners, Ella."

"Dear me, are you always on stilts?"

"Do you think I am?"

"Well, no. Now I think of it, you are always just the same. Aunt Mary said you were just as polite to those clodhoppers on her farm as you are to our city beaux. And yet you are never stiff or constrained. I believe you are right; your company manners are every-day ones, or your every-day ones serve for company; which is it?"

"Just as you please."

"Well, I frankly confess I put off my airs and graces when I am alone, and take my ease. Are you going to Mrs. Eustace's to-morrow evening?"

"I think so. Mrs. Eustace was one of the friends who was as kind to me when I was a milliner as she is now. I made all her bonnets for four years."

"Alice Dunham, do drop that milliner store!"

"I will try, Ella. I am not ashamed of it, and it seems natural to speak of what was my life for so long a time. But if it annoys my friends, I will try to consign it to oblivion."

"You'll never get married if you don't. I am sure no gentleman would like to hear his wife telling she had worked in a milliner's. Oh, Alice, do tell me, by the way, is young Harding—"

"Ella, please," said Alice, in a distressed tone.

"Pshaw! We are alone. That venerable party in the corner has gone to sleep behind his newspaper, and who cares for the waiters?"

"I do. I shall really consider it a favor if you will reserve a discussion of our own affairs until we are at home."

"Our own affairs! So you consider that he is your own affairs," said the incorrigible Ella. "Bless me! You don't want any pink saucer now, Alice."

"Ella," said Alice—and now the voice was stern, and the manner dignified—"you will really confer a favor upon me, if you will converse on general subjects in a public place."

"Bless her heart, she sha'n't be teased," said Ella, laughing heartily. "Come; we have not more than an hour of daylight left, and I have some silk to match."

They left the "venerable party in the corner," still hidden behind his newspaper, but as soon as the graceful young figures had left the store, Mr. Harding, folding his paper, followed them up Broadway. They were unconscious of his vicinity, as they transacted their feminine business of choosing fabrics and trimmings, and still the difference between them was manifest in every trivial act and word.

There was no glance or start of recognition on the part of Alice Dunham when Harry Harding introduced his uncle in the evening, but he at once knew that there were not two Alices, but that his nephew's choice and the lady he had met in the restaurant were one and the same.

Her shy, yet cordial greeting, her gentle refined manners, her low sweet voice and graceful movements, all deepened the favorable impression the old gentleman had already received.

She sang for him, and her voice carried him back to the days when a fair young face blushed at his greeting, while in her manner was a respectful deference that was positively charming in this fast age, when years are disregarded by the youthful, and gray hairs are not, as of old, the royalty for the young to offer homage to.

The evening passed pleasantly till the tiny bell in the mantel clock chimed ten. Then Uncle Will. arose from his seat. No shadow of his morning quandary rested upon his pleasant face, as he advanced to Alice Dunham's seat. She rose to greet him, a little deeper rose than usual tinging her pure round cheek.

"Miss Alice," he said, making his old-fashioned bow, "my nephew, who is as dear to me as a son, tells me you have done him the honor of listening to his suit, but that you feared I might not be willing yet to have him seek a wife. Will you allow me to add my petition to his, and to beg that you will name an early day, when I may have the right to look upon you as a dearly loved niece?"

The girl's sweet lip quivered a little, as she said:

"You know that I am an orphan, alone—"

"My dear, dear child," said the old gentleman impulsively, throwing aside all formality, and taking her little hands in his own, "you will be alone no longer, when you give me the place of a father in your heart. As for Harry," and he laughed, "of course he won't count for much."

"Not if you try to cut him out," said that young gentleman, advancing.

A few more cordial words, and the gentlemen took their leave.

"I am so glad you like her," Harry said, when they were in the street again.

"She is a lady," was the emphatic reply—"not a polished up piece of vulgarity, but once a lady, always a lady."

And the old gentleman told his nephew his afternoon's experience.

—Borrowed thoughts, like borrowed money, only show the poverty of the borrower.

WIT AND HUMOR.

"I SUSPECT your brother's wife was a little out of temper last night," said an Iowa bar-tender to a fellow-citizen. "Why so?" "Because she came in here about ten o'clock, kicked over the table, drew a revolver on me, and led out her husband by the ear." "So; then I think that your suspicion as to her being a little out of temper is well founded."

THE citizens of Duluth, after a long struggle, have got a plot of ground for a cemetery; and now the officials of the place are disgusted because none of the inhabitants is public-spirited enough to become a corpse and start the cemetery. They now have hopes, however, of an early celebration, as a quack doctor has just settled in Duluth.

AN ALERT POLITICIAN.—"Your party is going to be beaten in the next election, and you'll be turned out of office," said a Democrat to a Whig, in the olden times. "I'd like to see an administration that can change sooner than I can change my politics!" was the triumphant reply.

A POET says,

"Oh, she was fair, divinely fair,
But Sorrow came, and left its traces there."

What "Sorrow" did with the rest of its harness the poet does not state.

IT is said that an Indian will sun-burn quicker than a white man. We don't know how that may be, but we are confident that an Indian will burn a son quicker than a white man will.

"A PART of your business will be to answer the door," said a lady to a new girl, just from Old Virginia. "'Deed, mist'ess, an' does your door *speak?*" exclaimed the astonished quadroon.

"ARE you not afraid that whiskey'll get into your head?" asked a stranger of a man he saw drinking at a bar. "No," said the toper, "this liquor's too weak to climb."

THEY call the opening of dead letters in the General Post-office at Washington, post mortem examinations, and the officer at the head of that department is known as the coroner.

CAN a young lady who refuses an offer, be justly accused of slight of hand? was the last question up for debate in the Keokouack Lyceum.

"WANTED—By a hearty boy of fourteen, a situation in an eating-house. *He understands the business.*" That is a well worded advertisement.

A DEACON in Indiana has four boys, the youngest of which is named Doxology, because he's the last of the hims.

THE reason that an old man is easier to rob than a young one, is because his gait is broken and his locks are few.

QUESTION for debate in the Slabtown Asylum—If a girl has a ringing laugh, must she necessarily be a belle?

NEXT to "the little busy bee" the bootblack furnishes the brightest example of improving the "shining hour."

THE chasm that swallows up enjoyment, and sometimes ingulfs friendship, is sarcasm.

WHEN a tailor gives a customer fits can he be justly charged with being revengeful?

BOOK-KEEPERS are said to be like chickens, because they have to scratch for a living.

WHEN may a chair be said to dislike a person? When it can't bear him.

THE drawing-room which ladies most dread is the office of a dentist.

A SPIRIT LEVEL—Drink that lowers man to the level of a beast.

THE true maid of honor is the girl who does not jilt her suitor.

THE sharp-shooters that are most dreaded are aching teeth.

MEN born blind can't be carpenters, because they never saw.

WHAT is smaller than a mite's mouth? Its tongue.

A MISER is far more for getting than for giving.

THE song of the humblebee is, "Hum, sweet hum."

AN idle man's favorite refreshment is loaf-cake.

AN old toper's last hope is an ale in his coffin.

CURRENT ITEMS.

AN unfortunate Baltimore gentleman, armed with a shot gun, went out in the woods in Harford county, Md., to shoot squirrels. Seeing what he supposed to be a large gray squirrel perched on the limb of a tree, he took aim and fired. Upon stooping down to pick up his squirrel, he was staggered by a peculiar blow upon the side of his nose, and before he could regain a perpendicular position, another stinging blow upon the left side of his nasal. He then discovered that the supposed squirrel was a hornet's nest, the occupants of which made a savage war upon him, and before he could beat a retreat his nose and right cheek were swollen to an enormous size. The incident required the unfortunate Baltimorean to remain in the house for three or four days.

IT seems that destructive floods have devastated portions of all quarters of the globe this year. The inhabitants of the valleys of Shilda and Amoor, in the Amoor Valley section of Russia, have recently been driven out of their houses by the rising floods, and have sought refuge in the mountains. Many Cossack settlements are completely swept away, leaving no vestige behind them.

IN the State of Illinois all forms of betting on elections are criminal offences, punishable by a fine of $1,000, or imprisonment for one year, or both, at the discretion of the court. In England it used to be a common form of bribery at elections to bet the voter that he would not vote for a certain candidate. The voter, of course, voted for the candidate mentioned, and thus won the bet.

A YOUNG man named Edwin Stiles, living in Pittsford, Vt., accidentally shot and killed himself, on Wednesday of last week; a few days before a farmer living in Cambridge, in the same State, shot himself dead because rain-storms and floods had badly injured his crops, and a boy sixteen years old, shot himself through the heart in the cemetery at Brattleboro', cause unknown.

THE death of a very aged female, believed to be the oldest person in Virginia, occurred lately near Brookneal, Campbell county, in that State. She was named Peggy Arrington, and was born in the city of Pittsburg in 1756. She was, therefore, nineteen years old at the beginning of the Revolutionary War, and one hundred and sixteen years old at the time of her death.

AN experiment was tried recently in Paris, to use an ostrich in place of a horse for drawing a carriage. A large ostrich, from the Acclimatization Society's Garden, was harnessed to a light carriage and driven by long reins by its trainer. The bird is said to have been very tractable, and to have passed by everything on the road very quietly.

THE horses attached to a steam fire-engine in Albany, N. Y., becoming frightened while being driven to a fire, recently, ran with the machine to the dock, and leaped in where the water was twelve feet deep. The driver swam ashore, but the horses, valued at $1,200, were held down by the weight of the engine and drowned.

A LADY suddenly disappeared a fortnight ago from her home in Greenfield, and it was feared that some ill had befallen her, but she came back a few days ago, and gave as a reason for her disappearance that she merely left home that "she might be better appreciated by her family when she returned."

A WOMAN committed suicide at Union City, Conn., on Tuesday of last week, by cutting her throat. She had been subject to fits of melancholy for nearly a year, and it was supposed she killed herself while out of her mind.

ALASKA is in a hubbub. The Indians at Cross Sound recently seized the steamer Rose, and held the passengers and crew as hostages for the payment of damages for the recent killing of some Indians by the Sitka garrison.

A TERRIBLE hurricane lately visited the Windward Islands, W. I., and inflicted frightful damage on shipping, houses, forests, crops, animals and inhabitants, many lives being lost.

EDWARD SWEAT, while at work on a raft in Oldtown, Me., was instantly killed by a stick of timber which was thrown from a saw-mill, near which the raft was lying, by a boy.

THE citizens of Chicago are actively and determinedly pushing up the authorities to the punishment of criminals, and especially to the hanging of murderers.

TENNESSEE has three thousand justices of the peace, "and yet," says a Nashville paper, "we have but little peace and less justice in the State."

WOOD-CHOPPERS and saw-mills are beginning to spread havoc among the big trees of the Yo Semite valley.

THE LITTLE DAUGHTER'S FIRST LETTER.

BY WILLIAM ROSE WALLACE.

Why, what is the matter? One moment her eyes
Bright as beams ever flashed from a June's cloudless sky,
And
Now all is rumbling down her young soft cheeks the tears
In showers.
Yes there's naught in the darling that inspires fears.

And now a low laugh from her little red lips,
Glad as breezes that sing where the violet lily dips,
And
Now she is whispering, "What! pray? Ah no!"
And now all her ringlets are tossing in glee.

Well, what is the matter? you ask. I will tell,
Just as willing as Joy rings her light silver bell.
When the musician and classic are together of a day,
Love,
Then genius grow but brighter for clouds giving way.

It is dear little Mary's first long stay from home,
And O, how delightful, she feels, 'tis to come,
For a while through new scenes with her young cousins, who
In her heart dearer, dearer, and still dearer grow.

But a whole week has gone since she came, and
She first letter she ever had—from home's own spot—
And Lily writer's her mother's! her mother's!
what blur
Was the darkling, while giving it kiss after kiss!
Now she reads it—it tells her so many sweet things—
How father and mother are glad while she springs
In each joy with her cousins on play's sunny wings;
But
Then she has so much, and she soon must come back.

And her brothers and sisters, whenever at play,
Still stop all at once, thinking of her and of May,
And the youngest refuses to join them—O, O, O,
dreary dark!
He wants Susie Mary adair wit us here—"

And old Towler, her dog, must not be seen to play,
And as if in answer will give a sad whine—
Then pussy purrs mournfully as long snorting—'tis plain
That he, too, is not happy till she's there again,
And her sister in the nest, and so just for each sweet one
Mary reads—see a sweet anxious girl at the
Calling on her to come out to play—"Yes," she
With a bound, and then, while drying quickly
Whispered low, "Well, it's sure for a while away
reason,
But I'm sure, after all, now I'd rather be home!"

A BONE OF CONTENTION;
OR,
The Waldemar Succession.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BANKER'S DAUGHTER," "MARY DERWENT," "LOST DARK," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," "A DARING GIRL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SUCCESS OF RING'S SCHEMING.

No misgivings of their past crimes entered the minds of Mrs. Early and Honor Glint as they were driven away from the Red House at a furious pace to the hired cab, driven by Patrol Meer's excited valet. They were too preoccupied with indignant thoughts of their strange treatment by Mrs. Early's new daughter-in-law to think of anything but the lying letter that had summoned them to Bolton and emanated from the petty malice of Mrs. Milmer, and neither Mrs. Early nor Honor once thought of Daniel Meer in connection therewith.

Ring's plans had prospered even beyond his hopes. He had prepared for every difficulty in the way, and had even had a second hired vehicle in readiness to follow the first one in case it should be necessary, and had foreseen that Honor would come to Bolton by the first train upon the receipt of his skillfully worded telegram. He knew that by Hugh Tregarne would not allow her to travel without other protection than that afforded by her servant and he had also counted on her having sufficient influence with the young Bonnet will not allow a descendant of hers to be left to the tender mercies of a stranger. His acquaintance was a lady, recognizing Mrs. Early as the lady who had called for Honor at Miss Brown's cottage at Southport, and taken the young girl away with her.

He had not been able to guess whether Honor and her friend and maid would proceed directly to a hotel or to the Red House, but he had been prepared for either contingency.

He had left Bolton by the afternoon train, after his accident, but all the little hotel, and the keen eyes of the police. The cab being borrowed, he dared not risk bringing trouble upon its owner. The game which he had undertaken to play required the utmost secrecy, the utmost ingenuity and cunning, in order that no clue whatever might be given to the police to seize upon, in the event of their wishing to question and detain Miss Glint.

"If the police have set a watch for me against the whole police force of England, including detectives, all looked up by Hugh Tregarne," thought Ring, as he again flourished his whip and drove on at a very fast pace, "they will be sorry when we return home, you know, my dear Miss Glint. We have been out to some innocent recreation, it is true, by this sudden journey, but we will return to-morrow, and then we shall be Mr. Glint and her daughter, and I have dipped a pit between you and them now which cannot be crossed."

"Is not the air quite close in the cab here, Mrs. Early?" asked Honor, "I feel quite ill. The blinds must be all up."

She tried to lower the window, but they were fast.

"Never mind," said Mrs. Earl. "The air is very chilly, and there's no danger. But I fancy our cabman must be intoxicated. How fast he drives! All the blinds shall soon be at the hotel!"

They were silent a few minutes, during which the cab rattled over the long country road, and then Honor again attempted to open the blinds. Failing in this, she resumed her seat, saying resolutely:

"We should be at the hotel by this time. I am sure we must have been driving quickly while we were at the Red House, or we should not be here yet. Mrs. Early, how can he have forgotten the name of our hotel?"

Mrs. Early sprang up in the darkness, and kneeling upon the cushioned seat of the front seat, rapped smartly with her knuckles upon the pane of glass which intervened between her and the driver. Ring paid no attention to the sign of music which was given him, and Mrs. Early gripped one of his hair found for the closed sliding, found it and pulled it vigorously.

The amateur cabman slackened his horse's speed now, and leaned forward with a hideous cough, while Mrs. Early lowered the intervening window, and looked out at him and beyond him at the dusky country road.

"Where are you taking us to?" she demanded, in a voice of alarm. "This is not the way to the hotel. We are out in the open country."

"What—who? What?" asked Ring, in the husky tones of inebriation, which he feigned with the skill of a genuine actor. "What ways! Lem me go. Goo up, there! Click!"

Away went the horse again, under the impetus of the whip, which Ring flourished with the air of a true master. He rolled to and fro on his box with apparently dangerous looseness.

"My dear child, what shall we do?" cried Mrs. Early, closing the window. "The man is evidently drunk. He misunderstood the time of our absence in the Red House in drinking. See! He is almost helpless. I—I—I do not—"

Honor arose and looked out of the front window. The driver's ample coat screened the greater portion, but she could see the cab lamps, which was burning very low and indistinctly. The horse was going at a very rapid pace, beyond the power of the driver to control. Ramps, no houses, not here, but she caught sight of trees as they were passed onward.

"We are out of the town, Mrs. Early," exclaimed the girl. "The man is taking us in the northward, or to the north-east. This road leads to Four Lane Ends. We must stop him. There's no use in screaming for help. We are out in the country, and there is no one to hear our cries. We must open the street from one of the side doors."

Mrs. Early shook her head.

"My good man," she said, in a tone of expostulation, "you are going the wrong way. You must turn and go back the way you have come. We wish to go to the hotel."

"Wim—wimmen always wantin' somethin'," was the response, apparently in a state of the most intoxication. "Go—go'way now. Let me lone, can't you?"

"Shall we take her as much, and she soon must come back.

And her brothers and sisters, whenever at play,
Still stop all at once, thinking of her and of May,
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"Where are you taking us to?" she demanded, in a voice of alarm. "This is not the way to the hotel. We are out in the open country."

"What—who? What?" asked Ring, in the husky tones of inebriation, which he feigned with the skill of a genuine actor. "What ways! Lem me go. Goo up, there! Click!"

Away went the horse again, under the impetus of the whip, which Ring flourished with the air of a true master. He rolled to and fro on his box with apparently dangerous looseness.

"My dear child, what shall we do?" cried Mrs. Early, closing the window. "The man is evidently drunk. He misunderstood the time of our absence in the Red House in drinking. See! He is almost helpless. I—I—I do not do—"

Honor arose and looked out of the front window. The driver's ample coat screened the greater portion, but she could see the cab lamps, which was burning very low and indistinctly. The horse was going at a very rapid pace, beyond the power of the driver to control. Ramps, no houses, not here, but she caught sight of trees as they were passed onward.

"We are out of the town, Mrs. Early," exclaimed the girl. "The man is taking us in the northward, or to the north-east. This road leads to Four Lane Ends. We must stop him. There's no use in screaming for help. We are out in the country, and there is no one to hear our cries. We must open the street from one of the side doors."

Mrs. Early shook her head.

"My good man," she said, in a tone of expostulation, "you are going the wrong way. You must turn and go back the way you have come. We wish to go to the hotel."

"Wim—wimmen always wantin' somethin'," was the response, apparently in a state of the most intoxication. "Go—go'way now. Let me lone, can't you?"

"Speak to me!" exclaimed the girl. "Are you going to kill us? Are you a—a false cab?"

She knew now that the man had feigned drunkenness—that the lying telegram to Mrs. Milmer, and which had summoned Honor to Bolton, had not been sent by Hugh Tregarne, but by the man who laid for her by an unscrupulous enemy, and that she had fallen into a trap.

"What enemy had she but Darrel Meer? She believed this man to be Meer in disguise. Ring did not answer her. She took the silence for assent.

"Darrel Meer brought me out here—to kill me!" said the girl, strongly and rapidly. "Darrel Meer, you cannot deceive me. Darrel, how have you learned you? Do you suppose I do not? Heaven pity and save me!"

The man shook his head and dragged her over the loosely common, regardless of her struggles. Honor made no further appeal, for hence young soul gathered all its forces to meet the dreadful danger which she felt that could die, but she would not give her enemy the fearful triumph of her groans and shrieks.

"Let me walk," she said. "I am no longer afraid. The ravage of death has made me as brave as a lion. But for you, Darrel, for you, I have still to be courageous. Darrel, let my last thank you! Do you hear me, Darrel Meer?"

The man helped her to walk beside him, but he did not release his grip upon her arm.

The moonlight was bright as from a lantern directly above the trees ravaged, but the girl Ring hurried her toward it. They soon reached it, and Honor saw that it was in proximity to a gipsy wagon of a superior kind, being a very neat and pretty looking wheels.

There was a door at the front and another at the rear end of the wagon. Ring hurried Honor to the latter, and both being under it attached to the door, which was found to be locked. Ring's eyes sparkled. A pair of powerful horses were harnessed to the wagon, and evidently patient to begin or resume their course, whether it might be. Ring came to a halt before the wagon.

"Please," he called, in a low, guarded, yet eager tone.

Honor started. She knew that her captor was not Darrel Meer.

There was a rustling in the farce on the other side of the wagon, and in a moment the keen years came aroused to them, and picked out in lantern from the ground, its light falling upon her.

"It is Gentle Ring's own daughter, and has been summoned to Bolton by a lying telegram," thought Honor. He had a large family living there when in a previous time, and he was then still in his convalescence. This girl was the child of his first wife, and Mrs. Milmer, who had inherited his shrewdness, cunning, and unscrupulousness, and was so invaluable to him in his designs. She was his partial confession in his younger days, and was also devoted to his evil interests.

"Ring!" exclaimed the man—that her captor was Ring Honor knew before the light fell in the hope of seeing some gleam of kindness in the face of Darrel Meer.

She might as well have sought for pity in a stone.

Gusty Ring was as overgrown, swarthy looking young man, with a profusion of black hair, out short at her neck. She was big-boned and muscular, and her face was as dark as her hair, short at her neck. She was big-boned and muscular, and her face was as dark as her hair, short at her neck. She was big-boned and muscular, and her face was as dark as her hair,

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER: EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1872.

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The Libeller.

If of all wrtitches there be one the most execrable—if of all villains there be one the most villainous—if of all men there be one to disgrace the image of their Maker there be one the most despicable, it is the wanton, wicked libeller. His hand is against every man; and if not the hand, the judgment and sentiment of every right-minded man must be against him. He condemns others recklessly and unfairly in himself absolved from condemnation, libertarily and with justice.

The law affords but uncertain and inadequate remedy for the mischiefs of libellous publications. Journals have grown to be so powerful that prosecuting officers and even courts are afraid of them, even when they are known to be in the wrong. Again, the libeller is not liable to be more or less man on every journey he reads, in a case of libel, when he is influenced and almost wholly governed by their partisan or personal sympathies and antipathies. These remarks are equally applicable to civil and criminal prosecutions.

Of civil actions, moreover, it may always be said that no amount of damages, even if recovered and collected, furnishes anything like a sufficient remuneration for an unfounded assault upon character. And when the original prosecution happens to be successful, the reputation inflicted is usually so remote and so slight, as to bear a ridiculous disproportion to the wrong for which it is a reference.

What then shall be done with the libeller? "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." It is not likely that He who gave the Commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor," will allow those to go unpunished, ultimately, who violate the law which He has established.

Much, too, might be done by an enlightened and improved public sentiment, to discourage the prevalence of libellous publications. The libeller should be more generally held responsible, he should be universally ostracised by society.

It has not been uncommon, especially at the South, for libellers to be cased or killed. But violence is to be deprecated. There are few offences, however, more difficult to prove it, or which seem to go further, in the public estimation, to extenuate it, than the perpetration of libel.

Lovers' Quarrels.

The correspondence of the *Ledger* shows what everybody knew before, but these letters remind us of it constantly afresh—how very common are quarrels between lovers. They abmound us too, how destructive to happiness many of the parties these quarrels often are. They generally arise from unconsidered trifles.

"Alas! how light a cause may move
Dissension between hearts that love!
Hearts which, estranged by disdain,
A word inkblot or mighty taken—
Oh! love that tempests never shook,
A breath, a touch like this hath shaken."

The breach once occasioned, by over-sensitiveness, is kept open by pride. Pride, which hearts are aching, but both are too proud to explain, or to make the first move toward a reconciliation. And so the rupture is continued, and those once apparently inseparable become parted for life—they still may possibly eat pains, but which are alike shrouded in perpetual gloom.

An attempt is made to heal the wound of disappointed love by an alliance with some one else; but how often matches made under such circumstances prove unhappy, almost innumerable letters to the *Ledger* bear witness.

If lovers would practice more forbearance and patience, more mutual concession, more regard toward each other, such differences might generally be prevented; or, if they occur, be readily terminated. Many more could be prevented or ended. It is absurd to wreck an argosy of hopes, and those the hopes of a lifetime, on such tiny breakers. Well might the poet whom we have already quoted, in philosophic mood, give the wholesome advice:

"O fool, that have the charge of Love,
Keep him in your bosom still!
As in the Fields of Bliss above
He sits, with flowers a feltered round.
Loose not a tie that round his clings,
Nor e'en a thought disarrange,
For even an hour's careless neglect
Will rob the plumes of half their light.
Like that celestial bird—whose nest
Is found beneath far eastern skies—
Love lives on fragrance, purity, and rest,
Love all your glory from his wings he has."

An old Study.

In the Vice-Chancellor's Court, in England, an application was made last month for an order of appointment of a person to convey real estate vested in ANN WALLACE, of Glasgow, represented to be a contemaniac; and in support of the application was read an affidavit of a gentleman who had acted as her agent for thirty years, and had in his possession a certificate of her birth, that she entered her one hundred and third year on the first of July!

TWIN MOUNTAIN HOUSE LIFE.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

What do folks do for weeks and weeks at a hotel in the White Mountains? Here come the most active men in the land, upon a vacation. It would do you good to see, when one sets his mind upon it, how lazy he can be, or how busy all day in doing nothing! Here are lawyers, bankers, ministers, manufacturers, who are noted for enterprise and restless industry. See them sitting on the verandah, sunning themselves with things which not one of them can remember in half an hour. At this Twin *Mountain House* breakfast may be had from six until ten o'clock. Ever except those going off on some expedition take the whole morning. Between eight and ten is the fashionable hour. Then come lounging, storytelling, croquet, ten-pins, billiards, boating, a tramp into the woods, a ride, or a bath. Here is a part of the morning for study, or reading, or correspondence; but these are exceptions. Men do not come here to work. They have earned a right to be fallow for a month. It is good for the brain. They will make more work in ten months than they will lose in the two months in a year for genial, jovial relaxation, all sorts of people meet together; a couple of politics, all shades of religious belief, all classes in society; and yet it is surprising to see how social, harmonious and agreeable it is. People who, at home, would not agree in discussing politics; no bitterness—even with a Democrat and a Republican—even with sound doctrines.

The whole morning there are religious services in the parlor, with prayer and singing. Almost every Sunday there is present some who is one of the world's lions, and who lend themselves to the pleasure and edification of the company with willingness. Men and women, while seeking enjoyment, have been quite unconscious of religious influence. Some six or seven hundred dollars have been given by the guests of the house to the various benevolent institutions, for the benefit of the neighborhood. A Sunday-school library has been begun. The house has been the means of a parochial library, for the use of the pastor of the small village church, and of the poor and for teachers. A donation has been made for the support of the pastor. The Sunday-school has not resigned, and the guests will not be likely to resign, the duty of keeping it up. The Twin Mountain House is conducted well kept, and has a home-like air to it, which renders it quite agreeable. The landlord, as the Giver, or the Prophet, it has a charm all its own. Nor are the children left out of the advantage from fashion or numbers.

The location of the house is very good. Indeed, I never know a place where so much good could be done and such money so easily made. Some great pyramidal mountain of the Alps, or the Andes, or the Himalayas, would be a little more romantic; but no mountains come here with large excitations. By a combination of circumstances, the location of the *Twin Mountain House* by railway, and steamboat, which will run from Portland, even more this summer, the house has been crowded, almost overcrowded. This fact will become of the people next year. For the Twin Mountain House is a little too far off to be likely to fill up to the overflowing of the River.

But I must make my annual report to the *Ledger* on the subject of the Hay Fever, or as it is now called, the Rose Cold, or the Autumnal Catarrh. His book is the only treatise on this subject, and it is very full and worthy of the subject. It would soon as if there were no remedy for this disease, and up to year, for some reason, the whole medical treatment has ever produced any good results. Now and then a case comes with the same treatment applied to others utterly in vain. The great discovery in this matter is that one can be free from it by resorting to certain localities during the six weeks or two months of its career.

Now, I am glad to have about twenty-five refugees, and to have established for them a substantial exemption from the disease, so that next year we can have confidence in the grocery hotel full of people armed with handkerchiefs and sneezing. The remedy is this. This is a bright and cheery place. The retinues, escorting and supporting the sufferers, are triumph, and are a pay and joyous set. It is a jubilee from the last gun. It is a fact, as I assert so many pleasant things, that I have considered it a great boon to the Public to have the Twin Mountain House and the Alpine, to Waumbeck, at Jefferson, the Whitefield House, Bethlehem, and especially to the beautiful Bethlehem—in all probability would have been quite a little addition of the extra to which the out dungeon not unnecessarily diminished.

Meanwhile, another year warrants me in saying that a resort hitherto unknown is now perfect, not one per cent. of patients failing to receive cures. Let no one suffer from it. Let him go out into the sun, stand in the mud, morning and evening, in the spray of dust, rain or chill, we are well. *Lose Don't*

Horrible Treatment of the Insane.

The expose of the horrible cruelties to the inmates of Insane Asylums which the *Ledger* initiated several months ago, has been developed by the press and by public action all around the whole country. Both private and public institutions for the insane have been subjected to candid and searching criticism, and in some cases the most startling results. The results of these investigations are painful, but salutary. It seems that some people are sometimes shut up in Lunatic Asylums for the basest purposes of life—while poor creatures are sometimes brutally beaten and trampled to death by their inhuman keepers. A keeper in the city of Philadelphia was tried for murder has recently been found guilty by a coroner's jury of causing the death of a poor lunatic, and contributing to the death of another. It seems that he was in the habit of beating, pounding down, kicking, and stamping upon his helpless victims, in a most shocking manner. And many more such keepers there may be in the public and private asylums in the land. Hence, the light of rigid investigation can alone reveal. Let us have that light as soon as possible. Let it be thorough.

Violations of the Law of Copy-right.

We are always glad to see substantial justice enforced against those who cunningly attempt by evasion to get around the law of copy-right, as well as against its more bold and open violation. We refer to this matter because of established value, a close imitation of its title by a rival publisher in a new work as its downright adoption, while it is more generally and justly considered.

In the English Court of Chancery a bill has been filed by the proprietor of a book called the *Birthday Scripture Text Book*, to restrain a firm from publishing a book called the *Children's Birthday Text Book*, and after argument the Master of the Rolls granted an injunction restraining the defendants from publishing the *Children's Birthday Text Book*, or any other book of the title of which the words *Birthday Scripture Text Book* form a portion, or any book so printed, arranged or contrived, as by colorable imitation to lead to the belief that such book is the same as that published by the plaintiff under the title of the *Birthday Scripture Text Book*; and ordered the defendants to pay the costs of the suit.

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"To very few," he tells us, "thrilled my whole frame. My father said he then lived but for the purpose, and if I would do all I could for myself he would do what he could for me. I remember well the road we were travelling when this conversation occurred. The hills are rocky, and the expense and sacrifice it was to cost my father so great, that I could only press my hands and shed tears."

The institution to which he was to be sent was Dartmouth College, away in the northern part of New Hampshire, among the mountains, not about thirty miles from the home of the Websters at Salisbury. It was the first of there being a college so near that made it possible for a farmer and county judge to provide his sons a college education; for, in those simple old days, a student would carry an important part of his provisions from home, or pay for his board in farm products. Dartmouth, the country owes anything to Daniel Webster, whose genius penetrated to the full credit of it, is due to Eleazar Wheelock, the first, old Puritan parson president, who founded the institution in the woods when the Websters were in the beginning of their race. Its origin is one of the most curious and interesting episodes in the history of education.

In 1743, Eleazar Wheelock, a young man of twenty-four, recently graduated from Yale College, was settled as minister of Lebanon, Connecticut. He was a man of singularly effective presence, for he had that prime requisite of an orator, a clear understanding and penetrating eye. He was a handsome man too, of an elegant figure, and he was accompanied by a wife with still more vantage: he was possessed of a considerable fortune. This fortune, and the connections of his wife, made a beneficial influence, and gives a young minister in a country place brilliant prospects.

As usual with the more learned of the New England clergy, Wheelock had become deeply interested in the Indians. He had made a study of a parochial library, for the use of the pastor of the small Indian village, and for the Indians and for teachers. A donation has been made for the support of the pastor. The Sunday-school has not resigned, and the guests will not be likely to resign, the duty of keeping it up. The Twin Mountain House is conducted well kept, and has a home-like air to it, which renders it quite agreeable. The landlord, as the Giver, or the Prophet, it has a charm all its own. Nor are the children left out of the advantage from fashion or numbers.

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THE INVISIBLE SONGSTER.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

The Morning blooms on the frosty heights,
Gath'ring the mists in his golden hands,
And slowly to view in the rosy lights,
The shadowy scene, like a dream, expands.

No sound to gladden the drear, bright air,
Which, but for the silence, were soft and warm,
Save a far-away note from chanticleer,
Or house-dog's bark from the distant farm.

When suddenly, trilled from a thicket dense,
A song pours out from an unseen bird,
That soothes the ear and charms the sense
With a cadence sweet as e'er mortal heard.

Scarce a leaf has flushed the woods with green,
And the fields are still dark in their sober hues,
Yet with color and beauty and joy the scene
That wonderful, beautiful voice imbues.

I know not the name of the feathered king,
Not a glimpse can I get of his lifted crest,
But his song is the soul of the breathing Spring,
And it finds a response in my weary breast.

Louder and clearer; the whole wide air
With its infinite, rapturous joy it fills,
Till soft grow the branches brown and bare,
And a green shade seems to cover the hills.

The little brook from his ice chains breaks,
And laughs in his sleeve as he leaps along,
And the frosty world to beauty awakes,
In the spell of the unseen herald's song.

Sing out, O darling of field and wood!
Our hearts, that were dreary, with thee must sing.
Thou hast caught the key of our hopes renewed,
And thy song is the soul of the breathing Spring.

THE BLACK DOCTOR;

OR, THE

Prophecy of the Voodoo King.

AN HISTORICAL TALE OF THE SPANISH RULE IN LOUISIANA.

By WILLIAM HENRY PECK,
Professor of History in the University of the State of Louisiana.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE FATE OF LEON DE VARGAS.

At length Adraste Scipian was satisfied for the time with his work, and stood aside to regard those features whose beauty had for twelve years been hidden by a stain nearly black.

Sixteen years had passed since the eyes of Ivan and Adraste Scipian had rested upon the beauty of this noble face. It was as fair as snow, though as pale as the whitest marble, and with a hectic flush on the cheeks—a flush caused by that drug which the pretended Voodoo doctor had administered to the unfortunate woman when she swooned before the hut.

It was a gloriously beautiful face, perfect in every feature, and appeared to be that of a woman of about twenty-five, though in fact she was nearly ten years older.

"Beautiful! gloriously beautiful yet!" exclaimed Adraste Scipian, as he gazed upon the face. "Much more mature, Ivan, than when we saw her last, but how wondrously has she retained the beauty of her maidenhood!"

"She is indeed most beautiful, my lord," replied Ivan, in a cold, grave tone. "Take care that your old passion of mad love for this lady does not rise to stand between your ambition and obedience to the command of the Empress. Unless your Highness returns to St. Petersburg with such palpably true proofs of the death of this lady as shall fully satisfy the Empress, you are never to return to Russia again. Nor I, my lord."

"Love for her shall not make me resign my wealth and ambition. Yet she shall be mine ere I prove to the Empress that the daughter of Ivan is dead."

"'Tis indeed my Angelique!" mentally exclaimed Perez, as he stared at the splendid face. "A million maledictions on these Russians! What crime do they meditate? Diablos! Sancho Perez is not in the mines of Almeida."

"This is your 'Isadora Raymundo,'" said Adraste Scipian to Perez, and pointing at the insensible lady. "At sea she shall be given to you to punish for the loss of your nose, Sancho Perez."

"I ask no more, Senor," growled the convict, in sullen reply. "I would kill her now if you would let me—with these," said he ferociously, extending his bony fingers like the talons of a tiger.

"Well, Juan," said Ivan, turning to the old negro, whose eyes were fixed in wonder and awe upon the beautiful and motionless face. "What have you to say of this face?"

"'Fore Gad, Massa Ivan, dat de same lubly young woman ole Juan done see rise outen dis ches' years ago!—dat time I done tole you hidalgos all about! Dat she! It am! De same de two men tooken outen dis ches'—which am bound to be de coffin ob de man, woman, or—"

"Silence! you black dog of Satan!" said Perez, grasping the arm of the old man.

"Yah! yah! Juan keep he mouf shet, Massa Cappen," replied Juan, and then to himself thus:

"It am true for sure dat I swored on dis Voodoo ches' to be de dog ob Cappen Perez, but when dat handsome young woman sabed de life ob ole Juan from de knives ob de two men what tooken her outen dis ches', ole Juan swored in he soul ob souls eber to be ready to gib him own life in de sarbice ob dat young woman!—an' 'fore God dis ole colored hidalgo gwine to be true to dat soul oaf, ef he die for it!"

But the old negro was very careful to keep these thoughts to himself.

"Yes, Juan," said Adraste Scipian, "this is the same woman whom you saw taken from the chest. Now do you and Joseph go out and prepare something for us to eat. Cook it out there, for I wish this hut to be perfectly quiet while this woman sleeps. By night she may be able to tell us why she hid in that chest."

Juan and Perez, perceiving that Adraste Scipian was preparing some medical potion, left the hut to build a fire near it, and to prepare a meal for all.

It was very easy for Juan and Perez to converse privately as they did this.

"Juan," said Perez, "you have not forgotten your oath on the Voodoo chest—your oath to be true to me?"

"Axed me dat a good many times ob late, Cappen. What you want?"

"We must save the life of my Angelique."

"Your Angelique? who dat, Cappen?"

"That beautiful and unfortunate lady in the hut."

"She your Angelique?"

"Yes. Diablos! She must be rescued from these murderous Russians, Juan."

"Jes heered Don Sebastian tell you he gwine to gib dat lady in dar to you, Massa Cappen, when we all at sea in dat vessel Massa Ivan tole us about dis morning."

"Juan, I am not deceived. They mean to throw me, and you too, to the sharks when they have done with us; and they will be done with us as soon as they have the lady aboard that vessel. They will not leave us alive to tell what they have done."

"Juan 'fraid dat is true, Cappen. But what you gwine to do wid de lady, ef we rescue her?"

"Time was when she would have been treated as badly by me as they mean to treat her, Juan. That time is passed. I wish to kill these Russians. Then I will aid the lady to do anything she may desire, Juan. I will be her slave for life, if she will let me."

"Glad to hear you say dat, Cappen. But how gwine to do dat? Dem two men no fools, no chickens. Strong men, bofe—and active as cats."

"Poison them, Juan."

"De good Lor'!"

"I have a vial of Don Sebastian's poison in my pocket. It is the mate to that he gave to me to give Leon de Vargas. The very same poison that made Madame Varlville ill—the same that killed the old negro Media. I secured it this morning."

"How gwine to do de poisoning, Cappen?"

"Put it into something we are cooking—into this ragout, of which they are so fond."

"May be dey gib some ob de ragout to de lady, Cappen."

"We must take care that they do not. But the lady will not be able to eat for hours yet. Don Sebastian has just given her something to make her sleep a long time; and intending that she shall be conscious when she wakes. Never fear. I will take all the blame and their rage, if they detect the poison before it masters them. I could have managed the affair very easily without telling you of my purpose, Juan. And have poisoned you too, as for that matter."

"That very true," thought old Juan; "but 'pears to dis ole colored hidalgo dat ef de Cappen war not in need ob my sarbices he would as soon pisen Juan Olio as anybody."

"So you could, Cappen," he said, in reply to Perez. "An' ole Juan bery grateful to you for not pisening he. And, Massa Cappen, Juan wid you in tryin' to sabe de handsome lady. Reckin dat pisen bery safe not to be suspected, or Don Sebastian wouldn't 'a use him."

"That is very true, Juan; and so we shall be perfectly safe in using it," replied Perez.

"You use de pisen, Cappen. Ole Juan got no hand in de biznis. Juan shet he eye and see noting. Shet him mouf an' say noting. None ob he bizuis. Dat 's so," returned the old negro.

Leaving the hut and its vicinity for the present, we will return for a time to the Varlville mansion.

It was nearly night when Adrian Dudley and Madame Varlville arrived at the mansion from the swamp, as their ride homeward was very slow. Madame Varlville's strength had been greatly taxed by the expedition.

Having reposed for an hour or two after her return, she was aroused by Adrian, who seemed excited more than usual.

"What is the matter, my son?" asked she, as she reclined in bed.

"Monsieur Ralté, your lawyer, has just

GENERAL VARLVILLE EMBRACING HIS LONG-LOST WIFE THEODORA.

called, and the first question he asked was, 'Is Madame Varlville able to give me and these gentlemen an interview to-night?'"

"What gentlemen, my son?"

"I do not know them. I never saw them before. But before I could reply to Monsieur Ralté, one of the strangers said to me, with evident eagerness, and even agitation, 'Is the negress Mercita in this house?'"

"*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed Madame Varlville. "The honor of the Varlville name is in danger. What did you reply?"

"I replied that I would see you immediately, and I left the three gentlemen in the parlor."

"But of Mercita?"

"I merely bowed to him who asked after her, and both he and the other stranger mistaking my bow for an affirmative reply, grasped each other's hands, and uttered that Russian ejaculation which I have sometimes heard you use, '*Slava Bogu!*'"

"Which means, 'Glory to God!' my son. This is very strange. Conduct the gentlemen to the White Room; I will speak with them there presently. Fortunately I feel very strong after my sleep. Say nothing to them of Mercita. Send Ninette the hall maid to conduct them to the White Room. She believes Mercita is here in my bedroom. Then return to me."

Monsieur Ralté had not accompanied the strangers to the Varlville Mansion. He did not know them. He had never seen them before. He was in the act of striking the brazen knocker of the front door when these two, who had entered the street gate a moment after he had passed through it, joined him hastily at the door.

They were breathing hard, as men do after running very fast.

The servant ushered the three into the parlor, and then, at the request of Monsieur Ralte, sought Adrian Dudley.

Adrian hastened to meet Monsieur Ralte; but before he could speak to the lawyer, the two strangers simultaneously asked him that question we have just heard him report to Madame Varlville:

"Is the negress Mercita in the house?"

After Adrian had bowed to the Russians in response to their question, the lawyer took him aside, and said:

"I have bad, very sad tidings for you. Perhaps it will be well not to inform Madame Varlville to-night of what I have learned."

Monsieur Ralte then cautiously informed Adrian that the body of his cousin, Leon de Vargas, had been discovered floating in the lake below New Orleans, and that it had evidently been in the water several days.

"Poor Leon!" ejaculated Adrian.

"Yes. Unfortunate young man! He may have been drowned by accident, or some assassin may have killed him, and thrown his body into the lake. The fisherman who found it was obliged to bury the body, with the help of his comrades, as it was much decayed. But there were cuts in the bosom of the vest, as if from stabs with a large knife. Shall we inform Madame Varlville to-night?"

"I think not."

"At least it will be well to prepare her mind to receive bad tidings, Adrian. She must learn of Leon's death some time. So, if she will see me, I will prepare the way after she shall have seen and dismissed these strangers."

To this Adrian agreed, and he then went to Madame Varlville's bedroom and aroused her, as we have told.

His unusual agitation, therefore, was not from anything connected with the coming of the strangers, but because of the tidings brought by Monsieur Ralte.

Leon de Vargas had perished by the knife of Sancho Perez: we may as well state the fact here, and briefly. After the two left the hut, as narrated in a previous chapter, Perez resolved to secure the absence of Leon by murdering him. The convict feared lest the young would-be assassin might return to the Varlville Mansion, and in his guilty cowardice reveal all to some one, either as a relief to his conscience or by chance.

The truculent ruffian accompanied the doomed youth to the Lake shore, and there stabbed him in the breast thrice, each stab a mortal wound; and taking the body into that sail-boat in which Leon had designed to go to Mobile, carried it far out into the lake, and there, miles from shore, tossed it overboard.

The body sank, as Perez had tied a heavy piece of iron—part of the ballast of the sailboat—to the corpse. But after a few days the corpse rose to the surface, and was slowly drifted to the shore, where the lake fishermen afterward found it.

Leon had exclaimed, as he fell:

"Ah! assassin! why do you stab me?"

Perez had replied, as he dealt him two more terrible thrusts:

"Because I am Sancho Perez, a white man, and not Pedro Vargas, a mulatto! And because you, Leon de Vargas, are a coward whose life threatens mine."

Another than the dying Leon de Vargas heard these words—a man who chanced to be lying concealed near where the crime was done: a powerful and ferocious mulatto, who had recently escaped from slavery in Cuba, and returned to where he had lived in his youth.

This man, however, did not see fit to show himself to Perez, but saw and heard all, and then stole into the woods like a beast of prey.

This witness of the death of Leon de Vargas was a man whom Sancho Perez had kidnapped from freedom and sold into slavery, twenty years and more before.

The name of this mulatto was Pedro Vargas, and he was the half-brother of the father of Leon de Vargas—the very man whom Perez had made Leon believe Sancho Perez was.

And now to narrate the interview of Madame Varlville with the two strangers, who had been assured, as they supposed, by the hall servant and by Adrian Dudley, that Mercita was in the Varlville mansion.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE BUSINESS OF THE STRANGERS.

Madame Varlville, leaning on the arm of Adrian, entered the White Room, where her visitors were awaiting her.

Monsieur Ralte bowed as the stately old lady seated herself in that great chair or fauteul of white velvet before which Adraste Scipian had tinkled his Voodoo bells.

"Madame, as these gentlemen appear to have business with you more important than mine, I will retire until you are disengaged."

"No, no, my friend—remain. But these gentlemen are strangers to me, and my son has just told me that they are the same to you," replied Madame Varlville.

"Yes, Madame," said the elder of the two, a man fully sixty-five years old, but evidently vigorous and active, "we are strangers, but perhaps we have good news for you."

"Good news is ever to be welcomed, even from strangers; but I understand that you are here to speak of my housekeeper, Mercita," said the resolute old lady, thus boldly approaching the subject. "You cannot see her to-night, as she is engaged—"

"Yes, Madame. But let me first speak of another person," remarked the gentleman who had just spoken. "Has Madame never thought that a person may be alive, even when his own mother and father, and all who knew him in his childhood, have for years and years believed that he was dead?"

"Sir!"

"Calm yourself, Madame. We have great and joyous tidings for you," said the white-haired stranger.

"And I," thought Monsieur Ralte, "have black and terrible tidings for her. I must not tell them to her to-night."

Madame Varlville pressed her hands upon her bosom, and said, in a deep whisper:

"*Grand Ciel!* Does this man come to tell me of my lost Henri?"

"Yes, Madame. To tell you that your infant boy was not sacrificed to the Voodoo idols of Africa, as doubtless you have long believed."

"He lives?"

"He lives, Madame, and has sent us to tell you that he will be here to embrace you to-morrow."

"To-morrow! *Grand Ciel!* My boy alive, and will be here to-morrow to embrace me!" gasped Madame Varlville. "Give me wine, Adrian. I feel as if about to swoon."

"Gentlemen," said the lawyer, "Madame has but just recovered from a nearly fatal illness. Take care."

"I am strong again, my friend," exclaimed Madame Varlville. "Were I dying, this news, if true, would give me new lease of life. Yes, gentlemen, I have sometimes had a faint hope—oh, rather a fierce longing to hope—that my son was not murdered by the black savages."

"Madame," said the elder stranger, "we are aware of the story told to Dr. Adrian Varlville by the Voodoo king, Obi. But Obi lied. The boy was not slain."

"Ah, thank God!"

"Obi meant to rear the child to be a white Voodoo priest, but sold him to a Russian traveller a year after you lost him. This Russian, Volskoff by name, though fully informed by Obi of the name and parentage of the child, gave to him his own name and carried him to Russia. There he reared and educated the boy as his son, for Volskoff was childless. The name of the boy in Russia was Basil Volskoff. He rose to be a general in the armies of Russia. But he married a lady who was, soon after the marriage, discovered to be the daughter of the murdered Ivan Antonovitch, the rightful heir of the Russian crown. On learning this fact, the Empress Catherine II. endeavored to effect the destruction of this lawful heiress of the throne she had usurped. General Volskoff was seized, and would have been beheaded had he not escaped and hidden himself among the Circassians, who were then, as now, at war with Russia. Among them he changed his name, and having no doubt that Catherine had beheaded, or in some way destroyed his bride, he waged an unsparing war with the Russian armies of the tyrant Empress. For nearly sixteen years he served as a famous chief among those warlike Circassians who refused fealty to Russia. The Princess Theodora, his wife, aided by her foster-father, Count Romansoff, escaped the plots of the Empress, however, though for many years she has been supposed to be dead—"

"But of my son?" cried Madame Varlville eagerly.

"Madame, some months ago the traveller Volskoff was captured by the Circassians; and as one of their chiefs he recognized his adopted son—your son, Madame. The old traveller being at the point of death, revealed to Henri Varlville all the facts connected with his rescue from the savages of Africa, wrote them out in full, and told where you were to be found; for Volskoff, from curiosity to see the parents of his adopted son, twice visited this city. Madame may remember an old Russian gentleman—"

"Who was here fifteen years ago—and four years ago! I remember him well. He was in this city several weeks at each visit. He called himself Makoff."

"Yes, Madame. Makoff was Alexis Volskoff, as you will see when you read his confession to Henri Varlville. And your son has with him the very clothes he wore when you saw him last; for Obi had saved them, and sold them with the boy to Volskoff. He has also the ring which Obi told Volskoff you took from your finger and placed on the child's thumb, when you parted with him."

"*Grand Dieu*, I thank thee!" ejaculated Madame Varlville, lifting her tearful eyes toward heaven, and clasping her hands in an ecstasy of joy.

Here the younger stranger, who, as we have said, was a man in the vigorous prime of life, arose and knelt at the feet of Madame Varlville, saying, in tones which trembled with emotion:

"Mother, I am Henri Varlville! I am indeed your son! Here is the confession of Alexis Volskoff; here the clothes I wore when you saw me last; here is the ring you gave me when we parted!"

"And I thought they had slain thee with that hateful club. Oh that thy father had lived to see thee now, my Henri!" exclaimed Madame Varlville, after she had gazed at the well preserved boyish garb, at the well remembered ring, and keenly into the noble face that looked up to her own. "My son! my only son! my lost boy is mine again—is mine again!" she sobbed, as she embraced him who was no more to be a stranger to her. "Thou hast thy father's face and form, my son. God bless thee!"

Thus mutually embracing for a long minute, and then Gen. Varlville, as we may now call this suddenly restored son, said:

"And now, mother, permit me to see my wife."

"Your wife!" exclaimed the amazed lady, staring at the speaker, whose eyes were sparkling with anticipated joy. "Your wife, my son?"

"The Princess Theodora, mother. The daughter of Sediassa Countess of Arlenfeld, who was wedded to the unfortunate Czar Ivan Antonovitch in his prison."

"My son, are you sane? What should I know of the daughter of Ivan Antonovitch? True, I have read that Catherine II. had that unhappy prince murdered in his prison, in 1763; but of his marriage, and of Countess Sediassa, and of your wife— *Grand Ciel!* why do you say to me, 'Let me see my wife?' I know nothing about her."

"Have you not a woman of your household, a supposed negress, named Mercita, mother?" asked Gen. Varlville, smiling.

"I—I—I have!" gasped Madame Varlville.

"Mercita is a white woman in the disguise of a slave negress, mother."

"I—I—have long suspected that—"

"And she whom you call Mercita, mother, is the Princess Theodora—my wife!"

Madame Varlville, on hearing her son speak thus, uttered a shriek of wonder and horror, and sinking back in her chair, groaned:

"*Grand Dieu!* She is the poisoner! Tell him all, Adrian! tell him all! The honor of the Varlville name is lost—lost—lost forever!"

And Madame Varlville closed her eyes as if in a swoon of death.

"The poisoner!" repeated General Varlville, amazed, terrified, and glaring wildly. "Young man, what does she mean? Where is Mercita? Lead me to her! What mystery is this? Where is the Princess Theodora! The tyrant Catherine of Russia is dead, and I may claim my wife by her true name and title. Where is Mercita? She is my wife— Ah, by Heaven, she is here! Theodora! wife! love! darling!" And here Gen. Varlville clasped his arms around a form that had suddenly bounded into the room from the bedchamber of Madame Varlville, and leaped, with a wild cry of ineffable joy, into his outstretched arms.

It was she whom we have thus far known as the negress Mercita, but whom henceforth we must call Theodora Varlville.

"I am in thy arms, my husband! my Basil! *Slava Bogu!*" sobbed the wife upon the enraptured husband's bosom.

And "*Slava Bogu!*" said the white-bearded elder stranger, who was no other than he whom we have sometimes called Paul Smolenski.

A black and bald head peering in from the open door which communicated with the bedroom of Madame Varlville, grinning from ear to ear, exclaimed:

"Dis berry strange, take him any way! But reckin de great white folks got to t'ank de ole colored hidalgo Juan Olio for dis joyful exuberation! Dat's so!"

"And our child—the child I have never seen—my daughter of whom I have heard so much from your foster-father—dear wife?" asked Gen. Varlville.

"Was well and happy in Natchez three weeks ago," replied Theodora. "Ask Adrian Dudley, for he saw her last."

"I!" exclaimed Adrian, amazed—"I!"

"Yes, Adrian, for your Angelique is my daughter, and the daughter of this noble gentleman—my husband, General Basil Volskoff," replied Theodora. "Ah! for many, many a year I have feared you were dead, my Basil!"

"Henri Varlville now, my Theodora," replied the husband. "But my mother—I must look to her."

In truth Madame Varlville was stupefied for the moment from amazement, and seemed ready to swoon from exhaustion.

But while those in the White Room are enchanging explanations and congratulations, we will endeavor to set before the reader as briefly as possible the causes for these effects, as follows:

Peter I., usually called Peter the Great, Emperor or Czar of Russia, died in 1725. He was succeeded on the throne by his Czarina, Catherine I. She died in 1727. She was succeeded by Peter II., the grandson of Peter the Great—for Peter the Great put to death his own son, the Czarovitch Alexis, who was the father of Peter II.

Peter II. died in 1730, of small-pox, on the eve of his marriage. The Russian nobles, for political reasons, then gave the throne to Anne, Duchess of Courland, second daughter of Ivan—who was the elder brother of Peter the Great. Anne died in 1740, and by her will left the crown of Russia to the infant Prince Ivan Antonovitch, the son of the Princess Mecklenburg, and grandnephew of Alexis, the father of Peter the Great and the Czar Ivan.

Thus by will of the late Empress, and by direct imperial descent, Ivan Antonovitch was rightful Emperor of Russia.

But Elizabeth, daughter of Peter the Great and Catherine I., had a powerful party, and aided by that party, she seized the throne and placed the young Czar Ivan in prison, in 1740. Elizabeth died in 1762, the victim of disease brought on by intemperance. She left the crown of Russia to Peter III., great-grandson to Peter the Great. Peter III. was poisoned and strangled to death by his wife, three months after he became Czar; and the murderess became Empress or Czarina of Russia under the title of Catherine II.

Catherine II. was exceedingly fearful lest the rightful Czar, Ivan Antonovitch, should escape from the Castle of Schusselberg, in which he was confined; and by her command he was there assassinated, July 17th, 1762—three months after she had murdered her husband, Peter III.

Catherine II. then reigned securely until 1780, when she discovered that Ivan Antonovitch had left a legitimate daughter, the Princess Theodora—the Mercita of our story—sole offspring of his secret marriage in his prison with Lady Sediassa, a relative of his own imperial line; and that one of her generals, Basil Volskoff, had recently married this daughter of the murdered Czar, Ivan.

She was told this by a Russian lord, Count Apraxin—our Don Sebastian, or Adraste Scipian—who had aspired to the hand of the Princess Theodora, and been rejected by her. The Empress commanded Count Apraxin to destroy the Princess, and to imprison Basil Volskoff. The reader is aware that the latter was the lost son of Madame Varlville.

Count Apraxin, eager for revenge, hastened to obey the orders of the bloodthirsty Empress. But Theodora, aided by her foster-father, Count Nicholas Romansoff—the Paul Smolenski of our story—escaped the hate of Apraxin, and was for nearly four years pursued by him and other agents of the Empress through different countries of Europe.

In this pursuit Count Apraxin was aided by his brother, Count Ivanfosk—the Ivan or Père Dominique of our story; and during their pursuit they learned that a child had been born to the fugitive princess a few months after the beginning of her flight. But they failed to discover whether the infant was a boy or a girl.

They traced Theodora and Count Nicholas to Madrid in 1783, and by means of the numbers of certain bank-notes traced them to the West Indies in 1784. Among these notes was No. 13,721, used in our story. All the imperial correspondence carried on during the pursuit spoke of the fugitive princess under the name of "The Living Cross of Saint Andrew," or "The Cross," as that style of cross was a favorite with the murdered Czar Ivan while he lived, and was upon the gold case of a miniature stolen by Count Apraxin when he was a suitor for the hand of Theodora.

The miniature case, and that ring found by Count Apraxin in the Voodoo chest, had been given by the imprisoned Czar Ivan to his wife, Czarina Sediassa; but the portrait it contained in our story was that of Theodora, at the age of sixteen years.

The fugitives were for a time concealed in San Domingo, and it was there that Count Romansoff—Smolenski—conceived the extraordinary plot which was afterward so successful, to wit: that Theodora should assume the disguise of a negress, be sold as such, and remain as such while he secured an asylum for her little daughter—the latter at that time in England, but supposed to be in danger of discovery.

Prior to their voyage on the *Doubloon*, Count Romansoff visited New Orleans, and learning that Madame Varlville needed a servant of very rare accomplishments, and discovering the noble character of that stately and uninquisitive lady, resolved to secrete Theodora in the Varlville Mansion as its purchased housekeeper. While in New Orleans he discovered that Sancho Perez had, under another name, stabbed a man in that city; and it was a knowledge of this fact which enabled Theodora to terrify Perez, as we have related, by threatening to speak of that deed. The presence of the two Spanish officers, one with a green scarf, was premeditated, as both were secret agents of Count Romansoff.

The only great errors made by Theodora during all her flight were, first, inclosing the marked note No. 13,721 to Perez, and second, writing in her true hand "The Lord's Prayer." But in the latter case she did not intend that the paper should leave her sight.

After Madame Varlville had received Theodora as the negress Mercita, Romansoff went to San Domingo, and produced there the belief that he and his supposed niece had perished by the burning of his cottage; then went to England, obtained the daughter of Theodora, returned to Louisiana with the child, and placed her with an English family at Natchez, under the pretence that she was his grandchild, named Angelique—the name assumed by Theodora while she was in San Domingo.

It was in Natchez that Adrian Dudley became acquainted with Angelique, and fell in love with her. Angelique knew nothing of her imperial lineage, and returned the devoted love of Adrian. This was not unknown to Romansoff, who, as the hermit of the hut in the swamp, often had communication secretly with the disguised Theodora. But the latter was willing that Adrian Dudley should become the husband of her daughter, for she knew the noble character of the young man, and that no happier fortune could be Angelique's than to be the beloved wife of the brave, honorable and noble-hearted grandson of Madame Varlville.

But in 1795, or about a year before the illness of Madame Varlville, Count Romansoff set forth to find Basil Volskoff, Theodora's husband, as he had discovered cause to believe that the General was living, and among the Circassians. He found him, just prior to the capture and confession of Alexis Makoff; and together they returned to America, by

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way of Havana. There they heard that the Empress Charlotte II. was dead—a report not true, as that tyrant did not die until six months later, November 9th, 1796. There they were accosted as strangers to be plucked by Germans the paymaster, who offered to buy them the note No. 12,731. This led to a conversation, and Germans told them the story of how he had obtained it, how Perez and two great Russians had recently gone to New Orleans to find "leaders Reynando," and how he had heard all were lost at sea.

Count Romanoff and the Count hesitatingly surmised the truth, that Apraxin and his three-hundred brother Count Ivanhoe, were again in search of the fugitive princess; and as soon as possible they set sail for New Orleans. They arrived there at night, hurried from their vessel to the house of Perez, and were met by Don Wilhe Manzon at the same moment with Monsieur Sallie. As their minds were set at ease by being told that the disguised prince was in the house, their fears that her enemies had been lost at sea were put to flight.

It was discovered afterward that the Empress Catherine had elevated Count Apraxin to the rank of prince, at the time she was assisting Perez to escape from the prison of San Domingo; but that when, nearly twelve years later, she learned that Count Romanoff had been sent recently to Cadiz and he had commanded Prince Apraxin never to return to St. Petersburg again, under penalty of exile to Siberia for life—and the same penalty for Count Ivanhoe—unless he brought with him indubitable proofs of the death of the princess Natalie Alexis, and also of the death of Count Romanoff.

Therefore the inexorable pursuit began again in Apraxin and his brothers.

And now we must explain the sudden appearance of the rescued Theodora, of whom we had just left her at the inn in the swamp, after the last quarrel between Count of Perez and old Juan Olio.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE LAST OF THE VOODOO CHIEF.

Before Prince Apraxin and Count Ivanhoe—as we paint now designate the Marquis Romanoff and Ivan of our story—called for him to be brought to their presence, Perez had left Juan to prepare. Theodora regained her senses.

But before she regained them the Prince had freed his face from its dye and its false beard and false small earthenware, his head from the Voodoo wig, and attired himself in the costume of an English gentleman of the day.

It was then plain that he had the same thin and valiant-like visage as his wicked brother, the Count.

Theodora recognized her enemies at a glance, as her consciousness came back to her.

"Oh, God! I am indeed lost!" she groaned, and shaking back upon the bed.

The sun had not gone down, and there was a bright light in the room, for the doors and windows of her face.

"At last, Princess—at last you are in my power, and to be mine," said Apraxin.

"God pardon me and thee, Michael Apraxin! Thy work shall speak for thee!"

"Yes."

"Bear to murder me, as you tried to do years ago?"

"Not after a time."

"Nay, as it is only my death that your cruel mistress the Empress desires, give me some of your poisons, or a sliver from your dagger, that my life may end now, Apraxin."

"No. You must speak first to your child."

"Ha! of my child! No. I will not. She at least shall escape your fiendish rage."

"Behold! is a daughter, Ivan," said Apraxin to his brother.

She has much to answer for, my prince," replied the Count, pointing to the unhappy lady.

"Yes. I will force this poison upon her. When she recovers again she will be on the vessel, and strong enough to bear all that I have to store for her," said Apraxin, who then forced the again insensible lady to swallow the contents of a liquid phial he produced into her mouth.

Diablos! I cannot bear this much longer, Apraxin, maledictions on these fiends of hell-devils!" thought Perez, who was looking on. Will they never call for their boat?"

But soon after the two Russians did call for it.

Come," said Apraxin, "we must eat, for I am famished. Ivan, you will stay with the woman as the litter will be here soon and begin our journey through the swamp, so as to arrive at where the vessel is before daylight."

"I find the litter heavy and awkward," said the Count. "As she is unconscious, you and I can carry her by turns on your mule."

"True. We will do this. Count Perez—serve us our meal here before the last. You have been a faithful servant to us, and we thank you."

"Been true! long time, Russians—I know what to call de Senor now," replied Juan.

"Call me Mr. Elton; and this gentleman Mr. Dalton."

"Yeh, sah," replied old Juan; who had he been white, would at that instant have been able to drink itself.

He had just seen Perez empty the entire contents of the vial into the pot of coffee, and then pour the savory and steaming mess into a dish.

"All ready, gentlemen," said Perez, as he placed the repast upon a rude table before the bed.

The two hungry Russians ate voraciously, for their long fasting had given them a keen appetite. In a few moments they both began to laugh loudly.

"Diablos! It is doing its work," thought Perez.

"What make dem laugh like two fools?" thought old Juan.

Then the Russians sprang up and began to dance wildly, shouting and laughing like lunatics.

"Joseph! Perez!" exclaimed Apraxin, after a time, and laughing hysterically. "Give my young land for a rest."

"Yes, my friend Perez. "For a dance of death. Here is my hand. Now, my friend. The convict dances hand to hand with his highness."

"You are a traitor!" cried Apraxin, suddenly stabbing the convict in the side. "You have poisoned us with the Voodoo poison!"

"Diablos! I am badly hurt!" roared Perez, breaking away from Apraxin, ere the latter could repeat the blow.

"The convict wins the game!" cried Apraxin, throwing up his hands and falling dead on upon his face.

"Curse thee, Spanish dog!" cried Ivan, as he fell under a furious blow from the sword of Perez.

A million maledictions on you two!" exclaimed the triumphant convict, as he drew his knife to the hilt into the heart of Ivan. And upon you, your Highness."

Then he turned before he could reach the prostrate Apraxin, and said:

"I am badly hurt, Juan. Take my knife and make sure of your Don Highness."

"He done dead, Cappen," replied Juan.

"Make sure of him! Accursed fool! Caramba! I am bleeding to death!"

"He done dead, Cappen," replied the trembling Juan.

"Then come to me, and stop this flow of blood, or Sancho Perez will be as dead as he in an hour."

Satisfactly, Cappen. Do all I kin to save you, sah."

"So. That is well, Juan. A foal stab, but I will live yet. When the lady recovers her senses, go with her wherever she may wish Juan. Tell her how Sancho Perez loved her and died for her. That is the best story Bermundez has allowed to Angelique."

And then the accursed convict told much to Juan which Juan was to tell the lady, in case Perez died, and where to find papers which would force Gonzanla to give up the million of reals that belonged to Sancho Perez. And then two hours passed, and then Theodora, less affected by the last drug she had swallowed than Apraxin had feared, rushed from the hut, still half unconscious of what she was doing.

But old Juan seized her ere she could bound away, and with the aid of the litter bore her to the swamp, and placed her she was safe.

She soon aroused, and soon learned from the wounded convict the fate of Apraxin and Ivan, and of the plot by which they had deceived Madame Varville.

"Go with the lady, Juan. I will live if some surgeon of the city can be found, and another son seek," said Perez. "But if you find him dead, return, Juan, and don't hurry me in that cloud."

"Yes, Capten. Happen, bound to be de coffin to de man, woman, or child dat hurt de colonel. Juan will do de duty, sah."

"It was I, Juan. I was the first. But I shall not die yet. I have had as bad a stab at this more than once. Only a muscle is cut through—I cannot stanch it."

"He shall have aid," said Theodora. "Since I have been saved by him, I will save him. Madame Varville will go. But Juan, you are weak, old man, and I fear I may not always make my way through the swamp."

"Juan goes wid de banshees lady. Dis ole colored brudder can't be scared out. He had young white woman dat sailed him life in de Mississippi. He send on white chicken. Chap pers. I takes de Voodoo case wid me."

Then, as Juan supported Count Perez, as they departed, Theodora heard the latter say to the old man that his life should be blessed with her freedom, if I have escaped all before my morrow night. I know where I am hurt."

Half an hour after, with the aid of Juan, they had cooked lighting the space before the hut. Perez was then laid upon his blanket, his elbow and glance at him.

"Diablos! I am dead. I must try to rescue him," cried Perez, who then began to groan and writhe, and then to roll himself from his blanket to the earth, and slowly drew himself upon it.

Again, thought of all, could not move as much to evade this slow but sure approach.

"I come!" said the desperate convict, as he rose to his feet, and then fell upon his half an hour I will reach you! Then I will die with you, Ivan Apraxin, my friend, my foe, and friend again. Ivan! I will meet you three times, as I stabbed that coward Leon de Vargas!"

"Mercy, Sancho Perez!" gasped the poisoned Prince.

"I remember Angelique, and I remember the murder of Leon de Vargas!"

"Halt, Sancho Perez!" cried a hoarse and commanding voice, the like of which Perez had never heard.

"Ha! Who speaks demanded Perez, alarmed.

"Pedro Vargas!" was the reply, and the next instant a man stood between the rival and side of Perez.

"Leon Pedro Vargas. I have been lurking near this hut from the day you killed the son of my father, Leon de Vargas. I had the oath to avenge him, and myself. Sancho Perez, the father of Leon de Vargas was my brother. He gave me my freedom. You kill my brother and take his place. Defend yourself here to avenge myself and Leon de Vargas, Sancho! I am Pedro Vargas!"

"Who is that behind you, me?"

"Ha! ha!"

"Is the shadow before you, cullatto?"

"No one. I am here alone, Sancho Perez."

"Liar! Perez, you are a dead man! Stand aside! Ha! it is the spectre of Angelique! Angelique, my love, my love!" and Perez rolled the swamp like the screech of a woman in pain.

"Yes, Perez, Angelique, my love, my love!" and Perez, tossing one stab to his breast, and then expending away the life of the wounded convict.

"Mulitres of Sancho Perez, go to Pedro Vargas! What are you doing?"

"Juan going into the hut, Sancho Perez."

"For what?"

"To get you de Voodoo chief?"

"Devil! shut up!"

"I dead, I am dead!" cried Perez, and then fire the hut. Sunk shall be the vengeance of Sancho Perez!"

"Hold! I am not alone in this chest," cried Perez, as Pedro Vargas was about to turn down the lid upon him. "Malediction! the spectre of Leon de Vargas is here under the pall whose I have stain: of the Portuguese captain! Ha! ha! I remember now! It is the pall of the knight of the Vale my hell! ex-

"Yes, Sancho Perez, the pall of the knight of the Golden Cross!"

He was wounded mortally, but he had strength left to rise to his feet and confront his foe.

Then he sank down near the helpless Apraxin, and died, with his eyes upon the face, bearing, still sword mask, the last strokes of his wicked life.

The poisoned convict had not died until the next day. Pedro Vargas had been unable to leave before he died, and he died in the presence of Juan, Varville and the two Russians.

Juan conducted Theodora as they fled through the swamp to the hut, and when they went straight to the bedroom of Madame Varville. The latter, however, soon recognized the voice of Count Romanoff, as he was speaking to Juan, and rushed into the room.

We have related how she rushed into the arms of her husband.

When aid arrived in the swamp for Perez at the mouth of the bayou, Juan was missing, as the destroyed but remained. Of the chief, Perez, Varville and Juan, only the two latter were found.

The strange prophecy of the Afric Voodoo chief was thus fulfilled.

Of the fate of Gomana, we will state that the faithful Juan had left Perez Gonzanla to deliver up the reals of the dead convict, he having received from the dying Perez the authorities of Portugal were about to seize him.

One year passed, and Adrian Dudley was married to Angelique Angelique Perez, the niece of Theodora.

Though the tyrant Empress of Russia died in 1796, the Count and Countess kept happy wife never returned to Russia.

In 1800, Perez gave Lafourche to France. In 1803, France sold Louisiana to the United States; and the Varville family, by the politics of the Great Republic rather than rush to the aid of Napoleon in the ensuing war of 1812.

Madame Varville lived to see the children of Perez and the daughter of Adrian Dudley, children—well grown.

The beautiful child of the fate of Leon de Vargas, and well assured that his guilt was a safe secret in the lawyer's breast, he died, and, laid, in her stately way:

"I be a belle, Juan."

"Same as beautiful as your mother, Miss Angelique. She be still live in New Orleans, but not handsome as you, Miss."

In 1838, at the supposed age of one hundred years, died Juan Olio.

His last years were years of ease and full content in the Varville Mansion.

His last words were:

"I'st in de coffin, and dis ole colored bilgbo de Voodoo come ob de great Sybaya. No one can hurt Juan. I'st gone to de Lord."

The Voodoo Case was buried with him.

THE END.

[In our next number, we shall commence the publication of a new sea story by our popular contributor, SYLVANUS COBB, JR. It is entitled—

KATE ARLINGTON;

OR,

THE BUCCANEER'S BRIDAL.

A STORY OF SHIP AND SHORE.

It is full of interest from the opening of the first chapter to the close of the last.—ED. LEDGER.]

DECIDED BY FATE.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"If you will take it, Leah; will you?"

Archer Sherman laid an exquisite little fan in the hand he addressed, as he spoke, and it was, with taper, pink-nailed fingers, that just matched with its delicate face of Agnes and Ivan, and of the plot by which they had deceived Madame Varville.

"Go with the lady, Juan. I will live if some surgeon of the city can be found, and another son seek," said Perez. "But if you find him dead, return, Juan, and don't hurry me in that cloud."

"Yes, Capten. Happen, bound to be de coffin to de man, woman, or child dat hurt de colonel. Juan will do de duty, sah."

"It was I, Juan. I was the first. But I shall not die yet. I have had as bad a stab at this more than once. Only a muscle is cut through—I cannot stanch it."

"He shall have aid," said Theodora. "Since I have been saved by him, I will save him. Madame Varville will go. But Juan, you are weak, old man, and I fear I may not always make my way through the swamp."

"Juan goes wid de banshees lady. Dis ole colored brudder can't be scared out. He had young white woman dat sailed him life in de Mississippi. He send on white chicken. Chap pers. I takes de Voodoo case wid me."

Then, as Juan supported Count Perez, as they departed, the latter was heard to say

MY BOY 'S COMING HOME.

BY LUCINDA A. STELLE.

Good-morning, dear neighbor; I've reached here at last,
But quite out of breath, I've been walking so fast.
Which one of your children is sick? Now, pray tell me.
I've been up half the night, for my baby is not well.
And long before sunrise I saw the smoke rise
From your chimney, and I said, 'I'll my eyes
Will be opened to see if my neighbor is up
In the home of our neighbor, good old Mother Gray.'

For slumped and smiling, and flush as a girl
Who is waiting her sweetheart, her brain all
in a whirl.
With the tide of pure love, you are looking to-
day.
As if tides of November had melted away,
And back in youth's spring, you were calling the
flowers.
Of Hope and Content, for the bright, sunny
hours.
Are you thinking Like me, will come in a shade of
cold.
Or does some greater joy all your being enfold?
It is joy, neighbor, joy! Why, where have you
been,
That you've not heard the news! I'm so glad
I stopped in!
My son with his blessings is tied to the brim,
And would you believe it?—we've had news
from him—
From Jamie, our eldest, who ran off to sea.
A year old is he, and he's twenty-one now!
Twenty-one years next April since he went
away!
And Jamie, our Jamie, will come in a day!

My life has been happy—my life has been blest;
Three baby girls I have cherished to my
breast
Have gone to rest; yet none but a mother can tell
How my heart ached and yearned for my boy
her. Ah, well,
He came and the tears and the prayers that I
gave
Perhaps all were destined my darling to save.
No shield and no hope had my darling but me.
For he-dog, he is no mother, my boy's coming
home!

THE RIVAL SISTERS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF "THE CAJUN," "ME" WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLV.

DR. PRESLEY OFFERS TO MACON.

On a dark and dreary evening one travellers reached the great metropolis. Macon, however, knowing full well that he was destitute of funds, and that he could not afford to pay for the luxuries of fashionable accommodations at the St. Charles or the St. Louis, where they could put up for Europe, had decided to go home to write back, stating that such indecent treatment was often offered him to accomplish them, that he had concluded to do and, resign his professional practice to another, the sale of his few effects and those of Mrs. Blake could be made at the same time, and the money forwarded to them before they left.

Here Blake had very reluctantly consented to part from his wife, but the vehement desire she incessantly urged to be with her child, if it prevailed, and she went away rejoicing in the thought that she was really to be with and reconcured who was mistress of the situation.

The night had no friends who were sufficiently interested in her to care whether she went or stayed, and as for Mrs. Blake, her family as the unfortunate girl in question had also accepted Mrs. Blake's offer to retain her in her service, believing that she also would be taken to Europe.

At last Macon Macon found the friend to whom he had written—a dull, heavy looking young man, who received a gentleman's welcome from the new arrival. Macon, however, was disappointed as he looked beneath the surface to ascertain appearances of a character he did not trouble himself to make inconvenient inquiries about the affairs of his friends.

When they met they shook hands, and Hinton said:

"I am glad to see you, Jo. I am quite ready to go for you, had this letter not arrived, and, since made, and I've engaged a carriage to take us to the depot, so you can just put your trunk to go to a hotel."

"Thank you, Reuben. I knew that I could depend on you. Mrs. Blake's father is not in a condition to be seen by strangers, and the medical gentleman says he will be, I understand," and he touched his brow significantly.

Mr. Hinton looked compassionate.

"Why is the upper story out?" That's bad; but where she is going there will be no one to see her, and I'll send a letter to the doctor, and tell him to meet us at the depot, and take you to the place where you bring out your friends. I will drive in my cab and then I can look out for the hackman would never find the place."

This suggestion had taken place on the platform, and Macon returned to the train to inform Mrs. Blake that a carriage was waiting to take them to their destination.

The lady had been sleeping, and began to feel out, and looked ill. The others followed, and in a few moments they were whirling away through the lighted streets.

The life, bustle and movement seemed to excite the lady and she began to brighten and be quiet, and she began to laugh and make signs to Eunice, who sat in front of her in a state of bewildered astonishment at the sight of the gay, brilliant streets.

Hinton spoke on and on, gradually leaving the rear of the great city behind them, till they came in front of a large, gloomy looking house, with a light burning in one of the windows.

Trees grew up to the very walls, and rattled their leafless branches against the window. At the sound of an arrival, a middle-aged woman, with a cap on her head, and a shawl on her head, appeared suspiciously, but relied her was a kind of fortress, with a shrewd face and strong hair; and Mrs. Blake, whose spirits had begun to flag when she found how far the jaded cabmen drove from city, bailed his appearance gladly, and thought it would be easy to get rid of him by the medium of communication between her and Mr. Hinton.

Hinton got up to the door and rang. Presently he gave her hand to him, and quickly descended, she had thrown back her veil, and for the first time he had a view of her lovely face.

"By Jove," he muttered, "she's a regular stunner, she is, and it's a shame that such a girl should be so cosses. But Jo. Macon will bring her out of that, and make her a woman in many her. I believe I'll like to see her again, if I shouldn't be called to the shower."

Unconscious of his admiration, Estelle allowed him to lead her into the dilapidated portico in front of the building, closely followed by Mrs. Blake, with the two attendants laden with carpet bags in the rear. A baggage wagon with its negro chimes the alarm, the door of Macon, and he stooped to settle with the driver, while the ladies were shown in and had safely brought.

Hinton spoke to the woman at the door in a cheerful tone, asking her if she had been afraid to stay so late in the house with only a lad for her companion.

"Oh no, sir," she replied, "I'm used to be by my self. I wouldn't have been afeard if Jake had gone off, as he threatened once, I am't feared o' nothing here, though people do say—"

"Never mind what they say, Mrs. Brown," interrupted Hinton rather hurriedly. "Show the ladies the way into the house, and try to make things pleasant for them. You have supper ready, I suppose."

"Oh, I've, sir! I took a-deal of pains to have everything nice, and I've got really a supper that'll fit for Queen Victory herself."

During the woman more disposed to talk than the ungracious Hinton took the lamp from her hand, saying:

"You can go and look after things in the kitchen, Mrs. Brown, and I will attend to everything else. This way if you please, Mrs. Blake."

He led the way across a wide carpetless hall, with no furniture except a few chairs and those of every pattern, covered with thread bare cloth, and entered a large, gloomy standing half open. Here there was a large fire, and the fire burned in a large grate, which gave the gloomy room a more cheerful look than it could otherwise have worn.

Everything was ready for the night. In the morning Mrs. Brown took Mrs. Muller into the well-stocked storeroom, where she went away, and showed her where the various articles of food were kept.

The delightful meal was over, Estelle attended by Eunice, went out to explore the mingled pantries around the house, and Macon, after a long interview with Mrs. Blake, drove into the city to make his arrangements for an immediate departure for Louisiana.

He was not quite satisfied with the desolate old place Hinton had beguiled him into taking, but he did not know how to exchange it for anything better, especially as it would be necessary for him to be in the vicinity of the surveillance till Hester was safe under his own protection. Yet it would hardly be safe to leave four negroes among us in such a country house within a few miles of a great city. Hinton would scarcely be willing to spend his nights there, for he had shown himself nervously afraid to get away from it on the previous evening; so the only alternative was to take the negroes with him, and as Mrs. Blake was to go with her on the night, and remain as a sort of guard till morning.

But Hinton was to go to New York. A brief note addressed to Macon was left on his table, in which he informed him that he had been summoned to the sick-bed of his mother, and that he was for the first time in the little New England village in which she lived. He would be absent for a week or more, a day longer in New York, and he hoped that he could find some one who could be trusted to remain as guard at the country house in his absence. He had few acquaintances in the city, and he had no wish to increase the list of them; yet he was compelled to call on one friend, a doctor, before he left the city, at his bank in which Mrs. Blake's money was deposited by arrangement of the latter, to account for foreign securities. She had given him a check for a large amount, which he had placed to his own account additionally accompanied.

Macon then went to a hotel, dined there at a table with a well-dressed gentlemanly man, with a long venerable looking beard, who was also dining alone, and who looked through them as if he was extremely nearsighted. He spoke to no one, however, and scarcely noticed him, so deeply was he engaged in the perusal of a newspaper.

Presley looked better into what he had just went into the office, whither he knew Macon would soon follow, and, seating himself at a table down, and furtively watched for his appearance from behind a newspaper which he took from his pocket.

In a few moments Macon came in, and after paying for his dinner, he said to the clerk:

"I am a stranger in the city, sir, and for me only, but a consideration, for a few weeks, and my home is in Louisiana, for a few weeks, and occupy a country house in that State, and for the purpose of keeping guard over a widow lady and her child, who are to be under my own servants, make up the household?"

"I do not know of any such desirable room-mend for such a service," said the clerk blandly, and turned away.

Macon walked out, and Presley followed him. He overtook him in the street, and in a few steps he had the cab which awaited him under the charge of a small boy, when a card was shrewd in his hand, on which was written the name of the Reverend John Stillwell, and the address of a church.

I overheard what you said to the clerk, sir. I am far from rich, and need a little money. I can a man of peace, but I could guard your effects as well as any man, and if you would accept me, it would be a great benefit to me. I am not a stranger to you, either, for I have called on you, and you have also called on me, although you may not remember me. Can you give me reference as to your reliability? I am sorry to trouble you, but I am sorry myself at the same time."

"Certainly, sir. That is a precaution you are bound to do. I refer you to Mr. Rufus Blake, and the Reverend Mr. Hicks of Brooklyn, who will be happy to speak for me. I am to-day to-morrow night, and I will be glad to engage you in the service of the lady I have spoken of."

"Where shall I find you, sir? Will you be at the hotel where we dined?"

"I think not, sir. I have a letter to write a long journey, and the sooner I can be off the better! I shall be leaving the city by the early afternoon train for the South, and any business send me can be done by the time of mine his rooms on Broadway, and you can meet me there at ten in the morning. Good-morning your credentials with you. Here is the card."

And he thrust Hinton's card into the hand of Presley, who received it with a bow and exhaled. With a few more words the Rev. Presley walked briskly back to the hotel, gathered his carpet bag, and entered a train himself in his room, effaced the name from it. He then employed himself in writing a certificate of character that was needed, which he signed with the name of Rufus Blake. Macon might not recognize it, he then reasoned, but he would be a fool if he allowed that he had treated anything like a character to Estelle Landry's fate, and slept soundly.

At ten in the morning he arrived, and a few moments later he was joined by Macon. After glancing over the letter which Presley presented to him, he said:

"I am glad to meet you, Mr. Stillwell, for you have extricated me from an embarrassing position. This is quite satisfactory. I am satisfied that you will take the best care of my charge, and I shall be glad to see the end of my cares, and I will trust her to you till Hinton returns. I brought a boy in with me, who is loitering in the street. He will show you the way, and it will be best, perhaps, for you to go out at once, and inform Mrs. Muller of the arrangement I have made with you. She is the housekeeper and general manager."

"Very well, sir. You may start at rest concerning your fair friends, for I pledge you my word to their safety and comfort. Will you go, sir, point out the boy and the cab, I will set the exact spot where the pain lies, I think I can promise to relieve it."

She raised her hand and placed the tips of her fingers on the top of her head, and said:

"I feel as if a great blow had been given me, and I need a sensation of relief. My brain is on fire, and I am afraid I am going to that spot, and when I walk much, it gets worse. Dr. Macon couldn't look me in the face, I hardly think you can. I am afraid I shall never be able to remember again, and it is a pity, for there were others that had claims on me, but I ought to remember, and—I can't. Jo's it dreadful, Doctor?"

The soft tones of her voice sounded very pathetic to Presley, and his interest in her case increased. He had never seen a woman he thought more worth to darken over them, and blot out everything save a sense of its own existence, and he felt that he was in the presence of one of the most interesting mental condition?"

He was shrewd, and became so pallid that Presley feared she was about to faint. She noticed it herself.

"Let me alone, please. I am tired. I have been walking all the morning, and I want to rest."

Dr. Presley nodded to Mr. Muller, and retired to the next room with Macon and Hinton. She anxiously inquired:

"Well, Doctor, what has to be yielded, you know; and if you get her that far along, you can't stop now. You must go on. It is free-rate rates, and there's no saying to the consequences. Is it dreadful, Doctor? Is it going to be a long illness? I guess he'll be good for the money Macon thinks to swindle me out of."

"Hush, hush, Presley!" said the lady gently asserted. He can cure fevers, and deal with nervous ailments, but he is incapable of the management of a complicated case. I am sure that you will be kind to her, Mrs. Muller, for she is very ill, and if you are not kind to her she will be unkind. If it would be better for her to go to bed, I will administer to her the dumb girl."

"I will go with Miss Landry," said the woman quickly. "She is very fond of her, and something might happen to her—sure enough, if the girl was sent-off. I've thought that myself, but I'm not a lady, so it is no use of her will to put her in an asylum for the insane, Doctor?"

"Not now. I am afraid that will be the going too far. Mrs. Blake might bring an action against me for damages. She is not insane her as crazy, when she is not so."

"Then you mean to be such a thing. Besides, she has used such excessive quantities of opium that it has affected her brain, and she is not responsible for what she does. Between that and her mother's illness, you'll have a time of it, so stupid to make any fuss about what's done, Doctor."

"By the way, let me see that preparation, if you please."

Mrs. Muller took a vial from her pocket, and Presley poured the contents into the glass of water. Presley poured the contents of the vial into the glass of water. The woman will temper with opium herself, let her do it to any extent she chooses, but I will not be responsible for any such dangerous stuff as that. You may place morphine in the cup, and those addicted to its use are apt to become fit subjects for the insane asylum."

Presley returned to New York, and spent the remainder of the day in making purchases for the journey, and in writing a letter to Macon a few miles from the city, to which he visited the country house, and took his leave in charge. Fearing the return of Hinton, and his interference with his plans, Presley had determined to take the management of the affair entirely into his own hands, and, despite the fear of opposition from Mrs. Muller, who was the only one he intended to consult.

On referring to the columns of a newspaper, he discovered that a house had been taken for the summer by a family who had left the city in the suburbs of Brooklyn. The owner was going to Europe for the winter, and wished to lease to take care of the place, at a moderate rent.

Presley lost no time in calling on the agent. He found the gentleman's wife at home, and referred to his friend Dr. Wakefield for his character, and was accepted as a tenant. He then went to the house, and found that the furniture was of the most elegant description, and that the grounds were extensive and beautiful. He then went to

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

THE SWEET MAGICIAN.

BY CALEB DUNN.

An air of balm, a violet sky,
A presence as of some magician,
Who sweeps the earth and heaven by
On some grand mission.

I feel the light touch of his hand,
I feel his breath of wonderful sweetness,
And know that he will deck the land
With June's completeness.

The cheery sunshine wrinkles his head,
And from his lips the summer's power
Comes sweetly, like a love-vow said
To lover's pouting glower.

The leafless trees at his command,
Uttered in language warm and tender,
Put on their May-time gaze and stand
In their full splendor.

The robin sings, the rousèd rills
Leap with their magical temptation,
And all the air sweet music fills
With inspiration.

I see the violet sprine
To greet with smiles the passing presence;
There's new light in the day's eyes,
Joy's scentless essence.

The Arctic winds may disappear
No longer smells the lazar sonorous,
But Nature's face is lighted, green blows,
The floral world's decor.

There is a hope in every tree
Wherein the sprightly robin lingers;
Its chords are swept most rapturously
By unseen fingers.

I hear the notes the harp-strings feel,
I listen, and in listening I wonder
How earth seems beautiful when filled
With June's sweet voice.

AN ITALIAN LEGEND.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

This is the Cathedral of St. Jerome. There is no finer church in the world than this before which you stand. There are fifty angels' waits Sue! here on the floor, there on the broad steps, a stair. It is red—and, thick red. At a certain hour of a certain day in the year, they say it turns to scarlet.

This is not the day nor the hour for that event, though. At all events, it is still much dark on floor and stair; but the women who clean the church have never been able to scrub that spot out, in all these fifteen years.

It does not matter why. You may find some chemical reason for it, if you are one of those who do not like a little taste of superstition; but it is a fact that those planks and those steps have been stained with blood for fifteen years.

I had length of time ago, some half an hour before the consecration of a certain picture, to wander through the church, waiting for the organist inside to his solitary practice.

The picture of a saint, with meek blue eyes and flashing pale-gold hair, and hands crossed upon a white-veiled bosom, hung upon the organ's screen. Above a black cross, upon the edges by the setting sun, arose between the casement and the crimson sky; beneath the hushed church, long, solemn shadows lay. Here and there a taper burned before some great crucifix; the Madonna smiled from her niche, holding the Babe in her arms; flowers and candles and statues were all scattered, and mysteriously beautified by the fading light; and here and there knelt a penitent or worshipper counting her little rosary of black beads, and a priest, with bowed head, passed away through a little portal sacred to priests only, and disappeared in the recesses of the room behind him in the organ.

But this woman ascending the gallery steps was no saint, no penitent—a woman full of life and love and passion. The blackest hair, that ever seemed to glitter into the purple it kept, was kissed it, was braided about her head; her eyes were black as night, but had in them a smile—a smile that made a wonder of her scarlet lips.

An Italian woman, with Italy's perfect features and statuesque form; young, but only so many senses as young as a woman of her years born in colder climes would have been; not one of those women who are undeveloped at a child they wither into wrinkles.

She leant against the balustrade, and looked down into the church. She waited for something. Although she was soprano of the church, and sang every day, she was not waiting now to see the priest with his sacred host receive her, nor to watch other worshippers glide in to await the coming Mass.

Not a woman who had seen her but would have known that she waited for her lover. But no woman saw her. The painted eyes of the saint upon the niche were the only eyes there save her own.

At last she saw him. A figure with a one brown grace in all its limbs moved in the shadow of the portal, advanced amidst the shadows of the cloistered aisles, and passed the kneeling worshippers.

Then it vanished, and she knew that the saint upon the stairs could have seen it accordingly, had it had sight of blue eyes. A step among the shadows, a shadow crossed the marble floor, and then her lover passed her eyes met his.

He was a singer of the opera, who added to her gains by singing also in the church. He was a priest. It is not so great a thing to be a priest in Italy, where they are rather common; but he was also young and beautiful and, wealthy, as all priests in Italy are not.

They had met in that very spot. As she sat dreaming away the hours between service, she had turned and found him at her side. Her eyes had looked into his, and his into hers; both had been struck by their beauty, and still again. And so for Bianca, when she saw him she said to herself:

"This is why no man ever charmed me before. I waited for him."

That was six months ago. She used to ask herself whether she had really lived before she met him. It seemed now as though she had not, and that he was life.

His worldly aid to him had nothing to do with her love for him. Had he been a peer or peer like herself, he would have been the same to her, and the difference between their position never occurred to her as a matter that had anything to do with his esteem for her.

Some day they would share a home to gether, and whatever that home might be, it would be heaven.

When they parted he told her that to-day he should have something very particular to say to her, and through her mind ran all the thrills of hope. He would speak again of the beautiful star by the lake side, where they were some day to live together, perhaps. It could be only something like that, she should rejoice to hear, that his lips could have to tell her.

He sat down and took her hand. He looked in her face almost sadly.

"Bianca," he said, "you love me. Say it again: You love me; and nothing could change you—nothing."

"I can think of nothing while you love me well," she said.

"I never loved woman before," he said, "and never shall love another sisters, I swear it. I said just I have something to tell you that I fear will grieve you. Bianca, you know that my position in life—you know my duty—that it over occur to you that a prince might be a slave?"

She looked at him again, but said nothing.

"We do not choose our names as peasants. Put on them," she chosen for us. Bianca, long ago my father chose a bride for me. She is rich; she is young; she is as fabulously beautiful as I. We should each of us love, and I am to marry her."

He had held her hand so far. Now she snatched it from him. Her face had grown as pale as death, but she uttered no word.

"Bianca, dearest, it can make no difference," he said. "There is still the villa by the lake, to which I shall carry you. I will not turn your heart from me, this that I have told you? Bianca, speak."

"It is growing late," she said. "The singers are coming; I see them below. You must go."

"But you love me still?"

"The heart cannot change in five minutes."

"And you will remember the villa by the lake, and the happy life we shall lead there? Bianca, speak. Do a few words matter? Does a mane matter? Speak."

"No, no!" she said. "Adieu, they are here."

The singers were on the stairs. The church was filled with worshippers. The organ lifted its voice; the priest took her from her side; now the young Prince passed to bend his head before the altar, and the notes of his patron saint, and were gone.

The Mass was said. The people departed. The church was empty.

And in course of time the night passed, the day dawned, and Bianca's place in the choir was filled.

Then came people to deck the church with flowers, and prepare for Prince Luigi's wedding.

In the singers' gallery Bianca stood again, pale as a woman of stone. The rest chatted and laughed, and spoke of the bride, of the bridals, of the beauty of the bridegroom. Some of the brides she lovingly. They had seen her. Others said she was not beautiful at all. Bianca joined in none of the talk. She looked down into the church, as she had looked the day before, but this time no woman waited and no form of her lover.

They were to sing the wedding train in, these singers. Bianca had only to open her lips. The organist did his best. The soprano stood ready with her music to her accustomed place. The bride's foot touched the sacred floor. She was a young woman. Her veil fell about her pearls and diamonds glittered; a train of silk and lace was borne after her. She was not fair. Agree that the beauty of the sun as it passed up the church side, and he was a man who could not see it. He was a boy maidens of twenty years old.

Never had the soprano sung as she sung then.

"It is an angel, or only a woman!" asked the bridegroom, in whispers.

"It is an angel," said the bridegroom, and the priest heard him.

The priest looked at the singing. The music died away. The happy pair knelt at the altar's feet.

In the gallery the soprano knelt also. She never rose again. The silken robe, the scent of incense were not amiable, but when the blessing was uttered and the choir commanded to arise, the singers knew their part had come to an end.

Soft music. Some cut touched her.

"She is dead," said one.

"Dead, Bianca. Still at your prayers, Bianca?"

She did not stir, and the one who had touched her gave a cry, and pointed to the floor. Over a little red stream was seen its way, and dripped down the steps, just where the first drops of her lover's blood had run from poor Bianca's heart.

Italian women always carry a dagger about their persons. To-day, at least, Bianca had forgotten hers. It did not matter. She had her sister.

Poor singer though she was she secured such help as she could, and the Long Line offered her; but she had loved him well, and breath of life was gone. Then she was removed, and life became worthless to her. And so years ago Bianca died, and her ships, and St. Jerome's Cathedral has its legend.

PIMPKIN VERSUS BODKIN.

Jeremiah Pimpkin was a Dublin watchmaker and a householder, and among his class he was considered a man of considerable wit and shrewdness. He often declared that he should have been a lawyer, but that his father, who offered her; but she had loved him well, and died before he could afford it. He was always related, life became worthless to her. And so years ago Bianca died, and her ships, and St. Jerome's Cathedral has its legend.

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"Go from your native country," said the companion; "and who knows what good fortune it may contain?"

Young Ledbetter accepted the offer of his friend, and left his native country for that of another. The next broke out, and Wilkie was the transcript of a decree of a French court, together with a note from a lawyer, informing him that he was the sole heir of Marshal Bodkin, Duke of Bordeaux, and that a fortune of eight million francs, left by his illustrious relative, awaited him. The money was delivered to him upon application.

Ledbetter and Bodkin immediately set out for Paris, the sole of their scant furniture furnishing the means; and within a year thereafter his kind-hearted fellow-workman of the shipyard received a handsome sum in gold from the hands of Jeremiah Pimpkin, watchmaker, esq. It came not only as a token of their success, but also of their love and gratitude.

SCIENCE.

Whether the rattlesnake's rattle is composed of a number of other segments, or of one which in warning notes forcibly the approach of the dangerous reptile, has long been a subject for naturalists. Mr. Alfred W. Bennett, in a recent number of the *Journal of the Linnean Society*, gives an account of that which he has made in reference to this subject. He has become convinced that the rattle consists of a number of distinct rimets, and thus tires the birds who prey upon the snake, and who, when they have once heard the rattle, are afraid to approach it. He has also taken occasion to explain the apparent fascination which the snake is said to exert over birds; for, he says, it is accounted for like the influence attributed to other serpents which have no rattle at all.

The *Times of India* mentions a remarkable phenomenon which was observed at the station of Mandesar, on the night of the 15th of June last. This extensive tract, though uninhabited, was on that night the scene of a most brilliant display of lights, like a large city brilliantly illuminated. The appearance was that of a number of fires, each raised upon a small mound, and surrounded by a number of the smaller lights. The cause of this singular appearance was not ascertained. Many of those who saw the lights believe that they were caused by the spirits of the departed, as well as by evil spirits. Another opinion currently somewhat earlier than those grown from the seeds of the previous season.

Comparatively little is yet known of the Australian aborigines, and anything new in the matter but in an address recently delivered in Melbourne by Mr. Howitt, who has had the opportunity of observing the habits of the natives, including facts which may be regarded as establishing that of these the aborigines have had very bad weather or very cold weather is invariably preceded by a warm spell of weather. Also that when they have had a very cold winter the summer is more favorable to health than a hot. one.

The French Academy of Sciences has just had submitted to its examination a phosphorescent. This position is highly esteemed among scientific men, and consequently many aspirants to the honor are disappointed by the unfavorable decisions of the distinguished body. The final vote was taken on the 15th of June, and the successful candidate, named thirty-one for Mr. Lewson of Stockholm, who has devoted his time to the study of the phosphorescent light, and has made a particularly of deducing them from such facts as he has.

The discovery of rich deposits of tin in Australia, which has been made by the Government Geologist, the Government Geologist of South-ern Queensland thinks the richness of the ore deposits will be found to be unsurpassed. Professor of Mineralogy at Melbourne pronounces its quality unsurpassed. The deposits are found in many parts. These consist of alluvial tin, well known as New England, in which the richest of the ore deposits will be found to be unsurpassed.

The Daniel Draper, the Director of the Meteorological Observatory at Central Park, believes that the temperature of the earth is rising, and that the climate of the United States, as well as that of the Atlantic States has not changed within a century. These conclusions are derived from his own investigations. Both of them are contrary to the views of many other meteorologists.

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We learn from the recent message of the Mayor of the city that the rural spectrum in the large collection of bir's belonging to the Museum of Natural History, in the Central Park, and that the Great Auk, now extinct, which has been presented during the last year by Robert L. Stuart, Esq.

M. Le Verrier, the eminent French astronomer, urges upon physicists the importance of a new direct measurement of the velocity of light.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MABEL says: "It seems that your store of wisdom is inexhaustible; therefore I come to you, hoping you will help me out of a difficulty. I am engaged to a young man under age, but answer in haste. Correspondents, in next issue of the *Ledger*. I have been keeping company with him for two years, and we love each other devotedly. The only trouble I have is with my husband's mother, who lives with us. She is a widow, and has been for years. Before the first day I came to my husband's home, although I have tried hard to win her esteem and affection, I have failed. She is not friendly hand. The postmark was "Paris." He shook his head—for he was a man of sense—when he heard that his son was offered to be made a lord, and, when he was in a ship-yard; but the son was as wise as the father, and he would have refused it, had not a fellow-workman offered to advance the sum necessary to pay the postage.

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UNHAPPY WIFE (Boston) says: "I have read your paper many years and am now in great trouble and need your advice. My husband is a good man, but a hard drinker, swearing, and soon after having acted. I know nothing of the world, and thought all men were like my husband. I have a little boy, and my husband does liquor all the time; in fact, so much that it has injured his brain. He has a large property, and I am afraid he will squander it away. I love him dearly. Some one, knowing his weakness, got him under the influence of liquor, and he signs checks for large amounts. I have begged him not to do so, but he has done this many times. I wish to save him, and also his property. His friends and my own, advise me to get a divorce. I do not like to do this, but I see no way to prevent. I will remain with him. Is there any way I can save him? Can I get a divorce and control of the property? Can you help me in any way? My own life is a very unhappy one, as my husband is very unkind to me when he is under the influence of liquor. Please help me, for I feel that this may be my last appeal for advice. A few words from you will be a great comfort to me. Please answer as soon as I have seen as if there is no hope in the future. I shall look anxiously for an answer." This is a case in which we cannot advise. We can only sympathize with you in your present trouble. Your husband probably cannot be cured of his habit. You will probably cannot be cured of his habit. You will have to endure it as well as you can. Perhaps you will find that the first good husband will be cured. When it can be clearly shown that a man's intellect is impaired by drink, he can be put under the care of a guardian, who will look after his property. But we know of no other way.

DOMESTIC says: "I came to our village. like many others. I am seventeen years of age, have attended school, and am fond of study. I have a most close-stand high, especially in mathematics and grammar. I am very fond of the latter, and as I have no one at home to keep up the interest, I shall look anxiously for an answer." This is a case in which we cannot advise. We can only say that we know no reason why you should not keep up your interest, and we hope you will do so. Let us hear from you.

MATTHOUSE says: "Here is my case: I am married, and have been for three years. I have a little boy two years old. My wife's mother has become the wife of that friend's son. That son is now living with my wife's mother. I have asked my wife to leave her mother's house, but she will not. I do not believe it. He says he will die with sorrow if she will not marry him. I love the trouble is that I am engaged because my father said so; and I say that I will not marry her. Now, what do you think I ought to do? Shall I leave my wife and child, or what thought of this? I am not afraid of the work, as I am willing to do anything that is honest. I am a stranger in this city, and could get no one to help me. The purposes of gaining health and strength, the Hop Bitters are unequaled. I am sure they will do you good. Please answer soon." We are glad the United States navy, but a man in the condition in which you are cannot enlist. You must wait until you have recovered your health. We are sorry to tell you that you would find the work as hard as that on the farm